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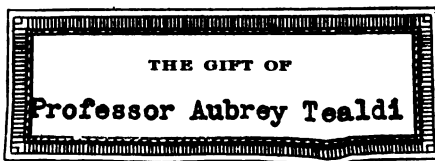
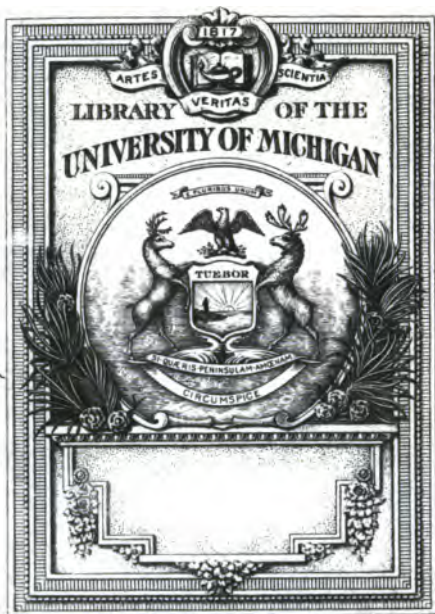
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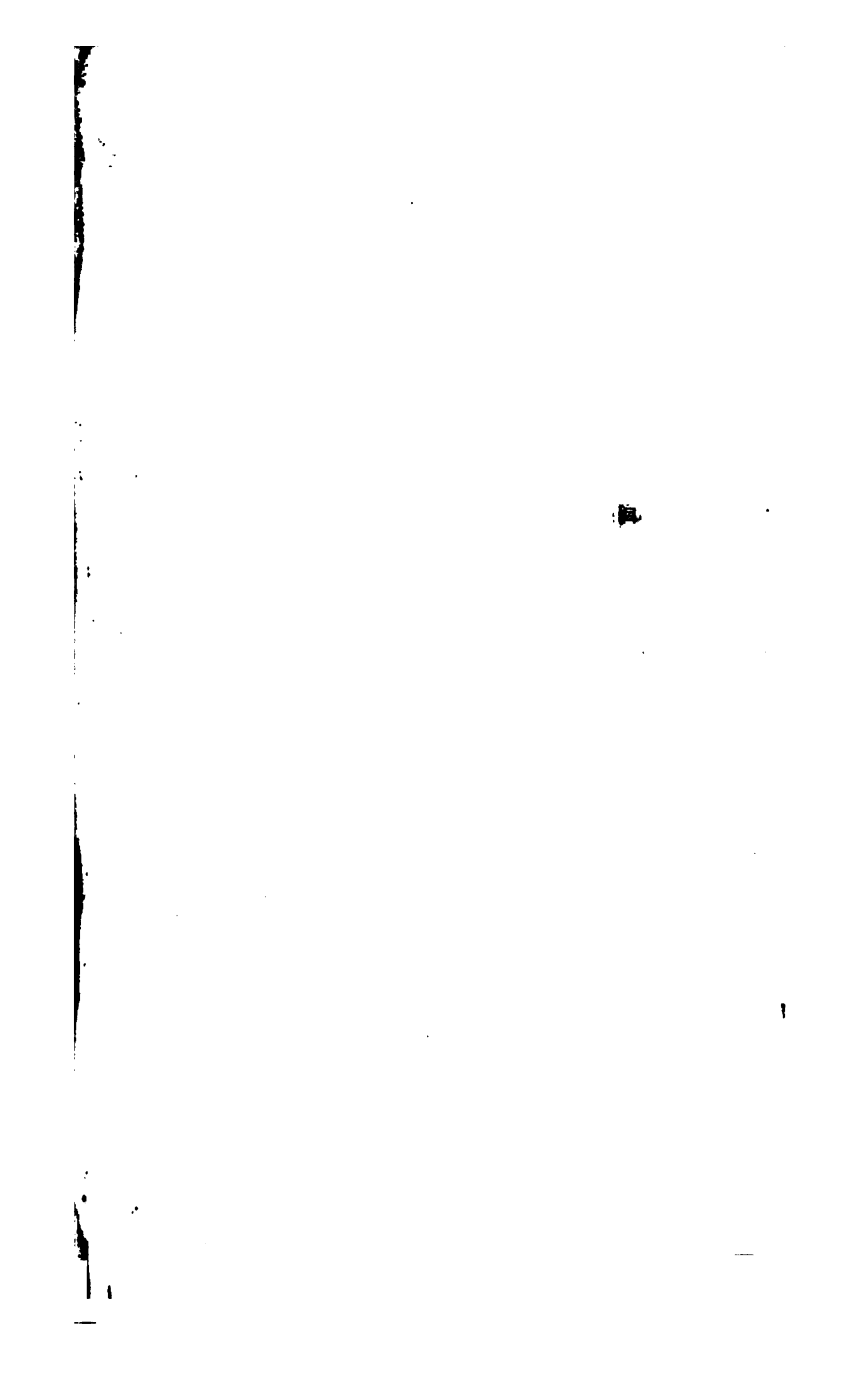
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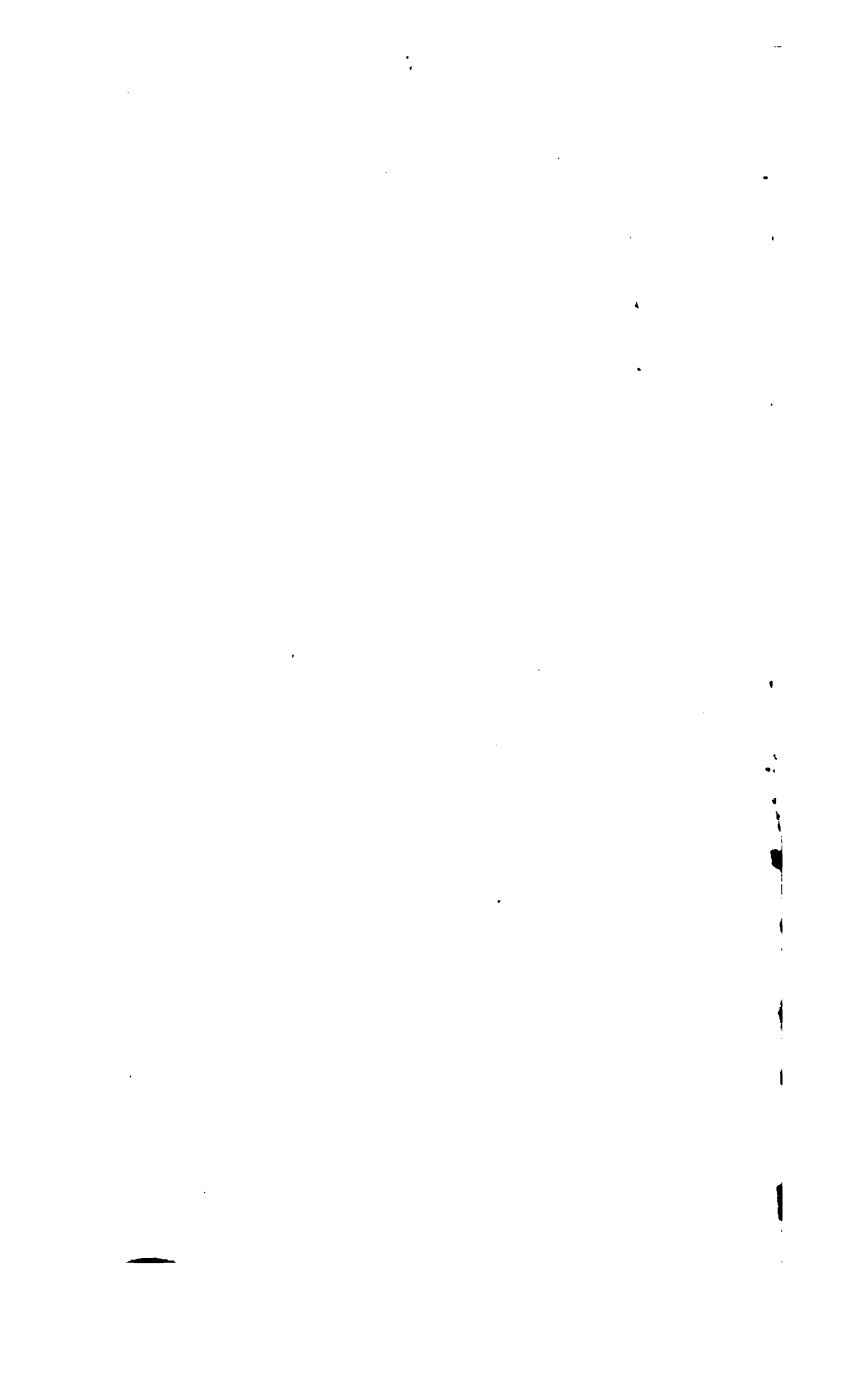
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THE  
ADVENTURES  
OF  
POOR PUSS.

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IN TWO PARTS.

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BY MISS SANDHAM,

AUTHOR OF THE TWIN SISTERS, ORPHAN, &c. &c.

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THE  
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PART I.

CHAP. I.

"A DOG," said a grave-faced tabby cat, to a companion of the same nature as herself, as they sat together upon the top of a sunny wall, "is thought so much of by his master, while I, except some old lady takes notice of me, or some squalling child, whose mother, to prevent his crying, puts me into his arms, let me cry and mew ever so much, am totally disregarded; and though he pulls me up by the neck ready to choke me, I dare not use

the weapons given me for my defence; if I do, I am beat and raved at by the foolish woman, while the child is allowed to do what he will, and let him hurt me ever so much, the excuse is made for him that he knows no better; while I am supposed to understand I must not hurt him; besides, 'the cat likes it,' says she; we cats you know are said to have nine lives!"

"Ah! that such a notion had never been taken up!" interrupted the other, "many a time have I suffered from such a supposition, and that of our always falling on our legs is another equally as bad for us; I can speak feelingly of this also, for though I have often been tossed in the air by the boys in our house, and as frequently fell on my back as my legs, they will not be convinced that there is no truth in the assertion, but are continually making the experiment again and again."

"Pray where do you live," said her companion, "that you talk of boys? surely not at



that school-house where I have so often congratulated myself, I am not an inmate; better, say I, to be at the mercy of one child than twenty or thirty great boys as I suppose you are; but why do you stay there? Cats at least have this advantage, that if they like not their present situation, they may at any time remove without the danger of being inquired after as dogs are; but they, as I said before, are too much the favorites of their masters to be lost even for a day without a search being made for them: nay, the crier with his bell is employed, and the whole town is acquainted with the master's loss."

"I have a reason for not leaving them, which perhaps you cannot guess," replied the other; "there is one dear little boy who kindly treats me. Alas! poor fellow, he seems as much to rejoice in having me for his friend, as I do in his company; he would feel as much at the loss of me as I should, were

any thing to take him from the school. Often has he interceded for me when the bigger boys have been making the cruel experiment I told you of, and when he has not been able to prevail, has cried to see my sufferings ; and when I have made my escape, he has found out my retreat, and come with whatever he could beg of the maids, or coax them out of, sometimes a little milk, or a few scraps of cold meat, and by every kind expression he has endeavoured to recompense the ill treatment I receive. ‘ Ah, poor puss !’ he will say, ‘ you don’t know how I love you, how I wish you were at home with my dear mamma and myself, you should not be treated so ;’ and then he will stroke my head and kiss me, and the moment he thinks he hears any of the other boys coming, he puts me down and bids me run away, while he will never tell which way I take ; but it is generally behind a great tree in the play-ground, or a hedge in

the yard that we meet, and are seldom interrupted. No! no! I can never leave my dear little friend while he remains in the school; but if he were gone, I should not long remain among them, though upon the whole I fare pretty well. It is but seldom I get into their hands, being able to conceal myself in many places they know nothing of; and as to my living, I am not badly off for that, in such a place there are many nice morsels which are thrown by disregarded. Your situation is worse than mine, I think; I may rather ask you the question, why you do not leave it?"

"I sometimes think of it," answered her companion, "but like not to do any thing in a hurry; I have seen much of the world, and many places where I have fared worse. I am fond of meditation, and while upon this wall my young tormentor cannot find me, and it is always in my power to keep out of his reach. I can

generally tell when his mother calls me, whether she has got any thing for me to eat, or if it is only to quiet her darling boy, and act accordingly, though I am sometimes taken in by finding, after I have had a good meal, I am expected to make a return by suffering quietly the pinches and pulls of the dear little George, as he is called."

"I should like," said the other, "to hear some of your former adventures, as you say you have been in various places; do tell me what you have met with in them? Were it not for my young friend, I before spoke of, I should certainly go abroad more, and see a little more of the world as you call it, for I have much curiosity; cannot you gratify it by giving me some account of what I am to expect."

"I cannot give you a very exact account," said the grave-faced Tabby, "for I have gone through so many scenes that most of them I have forgotten; few cats

have seen more, but, from the time I left the basket in which I was nursed by a tender mother, who would not suffer the wind to blow upon me, or the gentlest hand to touch me, if she could help it, I have never found any treatment like her's; though, when she left me to the wide world, we neither of us seemed to care any longer for each other. I had four brothers and sisters who were brought into the world at the same time, but for whom she seemed to care but little, as when the footman of the house in which I was born took them away from her, she made but few lamentations; having left me she appeared satisfied, and all her care and regard was centered in myself. After spending the usual time with her, I was allowed to crawl about the basket; but no sooner was I found capable of doing this, than I was ordered to be brought from the dark closet in which my mother nursed me, into a parlour, in which, though I had

opened my eyes before, the light was so strong that I feared becoming quite blind, and could see no one to whom I was introduced. 'Lay her in my lap,' says one; 'no, no; put her here,' says another; 'let her lie upon this cushion,' said a third. In short, there seemed so many voices, that I cried out as lustily as I could, while my poor mother, who had secretly followed the man who brought me there, made a much louder noise in answer to my cries, and many attempts to reach me while in his hand. 'Put her down,' said an older lady, who till then had remained silent, and who was instantly obeyed. At the same moment my mother caught me up by the neck, and had the door been open I should have been carried to our warm basket; however, she took me under one of the farthest chairs in the room, and there she licked me all over, kindly endeavouring to remove my fears by assuring me I was safe with her. We were suffered to re-

main quiet till I had recovered my fright ; and when I ventured to open my eyes, I saw several children sitting round the fire with a lady who seemed to be their mother. She presently ordered me to be taken away, and said I was yet too young to afford them any amusement ; my mother followed the same man who first took me from her, and we were soon safe in the basket, congratulating each other in being once more in our own territories. But I was not suffered to remain there long without notice ; whenever my mother left me, which now she ventured to do sometimes for two or three hours together, some of the young ones I had before seen came to visit me. At first I was as much alarmed as before ; but after being a little used to their faces, I felt pleased to see them, and even wished to be able to return their visits by finding the way to the parlour myself, which I was half inclined to do, as my mother seemed to absent

herself more than usual from me. Once, when she left me for a whole morning, I crept to the edge of the basket, and ventured to use my legs in jumping down; when my feet touched the floor I was quite pleased and astonished at the ease with which I walked. Not knowing which way to go, I followed the light, though I could not help crying all the way; I should have been very happy to have met my mother, to have had her direction and protection. I keenly felt her neglect of me, and kept raising my voice in hopes she would come; but she was out of hearing, and I concluded myself quite forgotten by her. Seeing a door open at the end of the passage I was in, I made the best of my way to it, and found it was the same parlour I had been carried to before. The moment I entered, some of my former visitors perceived me; 'Oh!' said they, 'here is the little kitten; poor thing! how she cries and trembles;' and one of the young ladies,



of whom I was not now so much afraid, laid me down before the fire. I soon felt the benefit of this, but still my anxiety for my mother made me continue to cry. 'She is hungry,' said a pretty little girl; 'I will go and fetch her some milk;' and soon they began to prove their kindness to me, for so they intended it, though I had some difficulty in thinking it such. In the first place, they warmed it over the fire, as they said it would hurt me to drink it cold, and then they held my head so tight over the saucer it was in, and put my mouth so close to the milk, that I was like to be strangled by their endeavours to feed me in a manner so unusual to me. I could not cry out now, for my breath was nearly stopped; and instead of lapping, as they wished, all my struggles was for liberty to hold my head up, which when they allowed me to do, I found my tongue useful in cleaning my whiskers and face from the milk which hung about them.

This was the first time I had ever tried to eat in this way ; but I soon found it much easier to feed myself, than to be fed by them. To see me eat was all they wished ; and I observed all their faces bent quite close to the ground, to watch my every motion. ‘ Oh, she eats ! ’ said they, all at once ; ‘ poor thing ! I am sure she was hungry, she enjoys it very much ; ’ and then, in a moment, the saucer was taken away, lest it should be too hot for me. At this time I heard my mother’s voice at the door, and all my attention was arrested by it ; the children heard it likewise, and some desired she might not be suffered to come in, lest she should again carry me away ; however, some of the older ones said it was very cruel to keep me from her, and our mutual cries prevailed, for I raised my voice as loud as her’s the moment I heard the well-known sound. The door was therefore opened, and I was soon in her arms ; but

she did not, as before, attempt to take me away ; indeed, she seemed to feel so much joy at again meeting with me, as to think of nothing else, and I wondered that I could ever doubt of her love, and I could not once reproach her for having left me. Having, as she told me, returned to the basket, and not finding me there, all her fears were raised, and by smelling out my footsteps, she traced me to the parlour-door. She seemed to enjoy the warm carpet and fire as much as myself, as neither of the children attempted to touch us, not but they continued to watch us very narrowly, and that they might do it more conveniently, placed themselves on the floor, and we were quite surrounded by them, when a loud rap at the door made them all jump up, declaring their mother was come home ; and at this news they seemed to feel as much pleasure as I did to meet with mine. When she entered the room, and had taken off her

things, they bade her look at us. 'Oh, mamma! the little kitten came here by herself,' said they, 'and was so cold and hungry you can't think, so we got her some milk, and she ate it, do you know?' In short, the whole story was told, and the inquiries she kindly made, as, whether they had not hurt me? and if they had let me have my liberty? were answered to her satisfaction.

"My mother now began to move, and the door was immediately opened, that if she liked it she might go out, and I was suffered to follow her, while all the children looked wishfully after me, till I heard their mother promise them I should be allowed to come back again whenever I pleased. After this time my mother left me frequently, and I became reconciled to her absence, and was soon able to provide for myself. I often visited the parlour, and found myself very happy there. I played with the children, rolled every

thing I could meet with about the room, and ran after the cork which they had tied to a string, just as they wished me; in short, I jumped and skipped about quite at my ease, and was afraid of nothing, till one day a gentleman came into the room, and brought a dog with him, the first I ever saw, nor had I ever heard of them before, but I have since found that they are our greatest enemies. I felt an unusual fear on seeing him enter, and yet had not time to escape before he flew upon me. He caught hold of my ear, and I have the marks of his teeth to this day, for he took a piece quite out of it; do you not see it?"

"Oh, yes!" said the other, shaking her head, "I know what bitter enemies they are; but pray go on."

"All the children screamed out," continued the Tabby, "and I should soon have been torn in pieces, had not their cries made the gentleman call him off."

I was left trembling and shaking, half dead with fear, till one of the young ladies, who loved me better than the rest, took me in her arms, sobbing and crying, while the dog was shut out of the room; there he laid, howling and crying to get to his master, while I, every time I heard his voice, trembled still more, and kept clinging to my little friend, who cried and trembled as much as myself. All I feared was the door would be opened, and this great enemy let in again; but this was not allowed, in compassion to the young lady, who was as much afraid of it as myself. As the gentleman found it impossible to sit long with all this noise, he soon took his leave, and the dog went with him, and glad enough we all were to hear the street-door closed after them. When I was a little more composed, my kind friends examined me all over; they found my bones were whole, and no part of my skin torn, except the injury done to

my ear, which bled a little. In fact, I was more frightened than hurt, having never experienced such an attack before: the children would have applied a remedy to my wound, till assured that the tongue of my mother would be the best cure for it; but I am sorry to say she took but little notice of the hurt I had received. From this time I dreaded to enter the parlour, nor could I play about as I used to do, though I never met with any thing afterwards to alarm me there; and as my mother seemed to have lost all regard for me, I determined to leave this house, not considering that in any other I was liable to meet with one or more of the same enemies."

"Before you proceed farther," said the other cat, "let me remind you of the time; see, the sun has almost left our place, and my young friend will, I dare say, be looking for me, for this is the hour in which they leave the school-room."

"When we meet again," returned the Tabby, "I will continue my narration, that is, if you are not tired of it; but I warn you, that at present you have not heard half of it."

"Oh!" said the other, "do not doubt my willingness to hear you. Consider my curiosity; I do not as yet consider that you are entered into the world; but, before we part, let me tell you, I have suffered as much from dogs as you, and more, also, for I have seldom any kind friend to call them off from me; and it was but the other day, four or five of the great boys set one at me, but I believe I made him tremble, for I have pretty strong claws, though so young, and when once we turn upon them, I find they are as great cowards as ourselves. I soon sent him howling away, and the boys laughed as heartily to see his distress as before they had at mine; it is just the same indeed to them, if they can make any of the brute



creation, as they call us, unhappy : this appears all their delight ; but I do think that there is not an animal among us that would hurt any thing, but in its own defence."

"And yet how these human creatures are praised and commended among themselves!" replied the Tabby: "but I will not keep you any longer from one among them who seems to have a little feeling ; 'tis a rare thing for any one to feel for us. To-morrow, at the same time, if you are at liberty, I will resume my story, and on this place. Farewell ; I wish you safety."

"I wish you the same," returned the other, and left the wall on which the elder one continued to sit, wrapt up in her own contemplations, with her tail round her feet, and her eyes half shut, till she felt the calls of hunger, and began slowly to move towards her home, in hopes of finding there some morsels.

which the wish of having all her plates and dishes clean, rather than compassion for the cat, made the mistress of it put by for her.

## CHAP. II.

THE next morning our two purring companions met again upon the same wall; the younger was the first at the place appointed, though she had not long to wait, as she saw her friend approaching slowly over the tops of some of the out-houses which were between them.

“Oh! there you are,” said she, when near enough to be heard, “I hope you have not waited long; but I could not come before, having had a pretty hard chase after a mouse, but I caught it at last, and received many commendations from my mistress for so doing. One mouse is better than all she gives me; and

if it were not for getting plenty of these, I should fare but badly where I am. I have heard many talk of our cruelty in catching and eating mice; but let them remember, we do it not for the sake of mischief, but they are our natural food, and I believe," continued she, with an air of great consequence, "were made only for that purpose; but those who tease and torment us cannot say so of our race, for we are of use to them in keeping their houses clear of such vermin. Notwithstanding their boasted superiority over every animal, I believe, without our help, they would find even these little creatures a greater trouble to them than they imagine. But how did you fare yesterday? was your friend looking for you? for my part, I had little George to quiet, as usual, till he fell asleep with me in his arms; and then I was rewarded with a little stale milk for my patient submission to his will."

“And I,” answered the other, “soon found my young companion; he had provided me a little milk in a saucer, and we had a comfortable game at play together till the school-bell rung again, when we were obliged to part, and I went in search of something more substantial to satisfy my cravings, which I was not long in finding, as the cook had left plenty of provision for me. But pray go on with your adventures; I am impatient to hear in what family you went next.”

“After I had left the former,” replied the Tabby, “I went across the tops of houses, and through some gutters, till I entered by the garret window a much larger house than that I had left: but no sooner was I in it than I began to repent leaving the other, I found every thing so strange to me. ‘How do I know,’ thought I, ‘but the first that enters this room may be a dog!’ the only enemy I at that time feared, for I knew of no other, though

I have since found many more. Some men's clothes were lying about the room, and a bed in it, under which I crept, and sat waiting my fate with no small degree of anxiety. Here I first saw a mouse at liberty; for though my mother brought me several while in the basket, she had generally so lamed them, that there was no chance of their running away. This was much too cunning for me, as, though I was very hungry, and would gladly have eaten it, it was out of my sight in a minute, nor could I by any means get near it again, though I had the mortification of smelling it behind the wainscoting of the room, and kept following it round to every corner. While I was fruitlessly employed, a man entered. 'What's here?' said he to a boy who followed him, 'a strange cat, I declare!' 'O father,' said the boy, 'let's have some fun with her: I'll take her down stairs.' Notwithstanding their entrance, I was so eager to

catch the mouse, without considering it must be out of my power while it kept where it was, that I took but little notice of them till I heard the boy's proposal: this rather alarmed me, till the father replied, 'No, no, Will; it is my opinion she is a good mouser, for she seems watching for one now: I'll take her into the stable; you know we have long wanted a cat there, and she will find plenty of employ, and a very good living, the mice there are ready to over-run us. I am sure I lose a great deal of corn by them. I desire, therefore, that you won't attempt to play any tricks with her; if she will stay, we shall soon find the benefit of it.' With these words, he took me in his arms, and carried me to a large stable, where there were several horses, which at first not a little alarmed me, for these were creatures I had never seen before; however, I soon perceived they took no notice of me, and after placing me gently on a lock of hay,

he went out, and shut the door after him, so that if I had wished it I could not at that time have made my escape: but I was not long there before I found the man's prediction true, and found so many mice which I caught and ate with such pleasure that I had no desire to remove, and congratulated myself on the good exchange I had made. When my master, for so I shall now call him, came again and saw the ravages I had already made among his troublesome enemies, for I left some remains of all, he bestowed so many praises on me, and seemed to think his having met with me such a fortunate event, that I felt my consequence greatly increased. 'Oh,' thought I, 'this is being of some use in the world, and far better than playing about with a parcel of children.' When I had been here a few days, I discovered that the stables belonged to a gentleman's family, and that the man who brought me here was his coachman, and the boy, his



son, a sort of groom, or under-helper, to his father. I was astonished to see what care they took of their horses, and how warm they were kept: sometimes the gentleman himself used to come and look at them, and one whom he called his rider I soon saw was a great favorite with him; this horse was out every day, and though but for two or three hours, there was as much care taken of him on his return as if he had been working hard all day. After a time, I found my provisions were not so plentiful, as the sight and smell of me kept the mice from coming in such numbers as at the first; however, I was in no want; for whenever I saw a mouse, I never let it escape, and my master often brought me a few scraps from the kitchen. Here also I saw several dogs; and, though I trembled at the sight, none of them ever attempted to touch me, though my master, I have no doubt, would have defended me if they

had. There are, you know, many species of dogs, and it is not in the nature of all those animals, I suppose, to bear such enmity towards us. William, also, though he often looked as if he could have done me a mischief, was in too much subjection to his father to attempt it, and I continued very comfortably here till my master was removed to another place, and the coachman who succeeded him was quite his reverse. Not having experienced my usefulness, or indeed giving himself any trouble to consider of it, he treated me very ill, and often beat me with his whip, till I could no longer bear it, and was at length compelled, in my own defence, to fly upon him; but this had nearly cost me my life, for he was much too powerful an antagonist for me to contend with. Catching me round the neck, he pressed me so hard, that my breath was quite stopped for a time, and then, with all his force, he threw me against the

stones, where I lay for some minutes, to all appearance dead. He was called away in a hurry, or I suppose he would have quite dispatched me. When I came a little to my senses, and saw that he was gone, I thought of nothing but getting out of his sight before he returned, and, as well as I was able, crept behind some wood that was piled up in the yard, and there I concluded I must lie and die; however, in a little time my strength revived, and I ventured once more to crawl out. It was now quite dark, and not knowing which way to take, chance directed me to the wash-house, as I found afterwards it was called, and under one of the shelves in this place I found some milk, which had, I suppose, been placed there for a more domestic cat than myself; however, I took the liberty of eating it, and found a very seasonable relief from so doing, but not thinking it safe to remain so near the place where I had ven-

tured to attack one so much stronger than myself, I made the best of my way, as fast as my infirm state would let me, out of the house. All my bones were aching from the cruel beating and blows I had received, and I went groaning along a little narrow lane, which seemed to be leading me from the residence of any human being. After travelling in this miserable state, and very slowly, for some time, I perceived a woman in a red cloak, and with a little lantern in her hand, coming towards me; she heard my cries, and seemed desirous of helping me. 'Poor thing,' said she, stooping down, 'I dare say you have been sadly used by some wicked boys; I have a great mind to take you home to my Sally, she will take care of you I will be bound to say.' On hearing her voice, I cried more piteously than before, for I felt myself quite stiff with the cold, as well as the pain I felt; this increased her compassion, and, reaching out her hand,

she took me off the ground. Gentle as her touches were, I could scarcely bear the pressure of her hand, though I forbore to cry out, hoping that I had now met with a friend. She wrapped me up in her cloak, and we were soon at a neat little cottage by the road side, in which we found a clean looking man and a little girl, who looked very ill, in a large easy chair, by the side of the fire, and appeared very happy at our entrance. 'Dear mother,' said she, how long you have been gone! 'tis past seven o'clock; I thought the time so long till father came in.' 'Oh, my dear,' replied the woman, looking very affectionately towards her, 'I could not get the doctor's stuff before; it was not made up when I called first: but see what I have brought you,' opening her cloak, and shewing me, 'something for you to nurse now,' continued she, 'a poor cat I met with on the road; she made such a piteous mean that I could not help

taking her up ; I will be bound to say she has been sadly worried by some of the boys of the town ; nasty fellows, I wish they could be well flogged for it.' Sally smiled on receiving me into her lap. ' Poor thing ! ' said she, tenderly stroking me, ' I will take care of you : what a pretty creature she is ! thank you, mother, for bringing her home ; I can see all the strokes of the whip across her back,' and again she pitied me. ' But don't you think, mother,' said she, ' she wants something to eat ? do let her have some milk, and let her sleep in my bed to-night, won't you ? ' ' If you will take what I have brought you directly,' answered her mother, taking a vial out of her pocket, ' I will get her some milk as soon as ever you have ; but as to her sleeping with you, I think you will find her but a troublesome bed-fellow.' ' Ah, so I think,' said her father ; ' if you are kind to her, you need not be afraid of

finding her here in the morning ; besides, we will fasten all the doors, that she shall not get away.' Sally looked a little disappointed, but said no more of my passing the night with her. After a few more entreaties, and in consideration of my being so very hungry, as she supposed I was, she soon swallowed down the bitter potion her mother had poured out, with many warm and tender wishes that it might be of service to her. After I had had my milk, and which she with great pleasure was allowed to give me while I lay in her lap, it was time for her to go to bed ; and I perceived, by her father's carrying her up stairs in his arms, she was too weak to walk. ' Come, my dear child,' said he, as he took her from her seat, ' you are better to-night, you will soon be able to walk up stairs yourself, not that I am tired of carrying you, don't think so, my love.' The careful mother carried up a pan of

coals to warm her bed, and I was left to enjoy the fire-side till their return. All their conversation while eating their supper was respecting little Sally, who appeared the chief object of their care; they made room for me by the fire, where I soon fell asleep, and did not wake till they also had been gone to bed some time, for it was not long before the man came down, and opening the door, he went out to his work. Soon after his wife followed him, and taking me in her arms, she carried me up stairs, and laid me on the bed with her daughter, who received me with great pleasure. 'My pretty Puss,' said she, 'come here and I will nurse you.' Here I enjoyed the warm blanket she wrapped me in very much, as I began to feel the cold greatly below; it also seemed to give ease to my poor stiff bones and joints. 'When I have set the house to rights,' said her mother, 'and lighted the fire, my dear, I will come and fetch you



down, and you and your cat shall have your breakfast.' This promise was soon fulfilled, and little Sally was carried down, and I trotted by the side of her. We were soon seated by the fire, where her father presently joined us, with many tender inquiries after his dear child. 'You were not awake this morning,' said he, 'when I got up, were you?' 'No, father,' answered she; 'did you see my cat when you came down? You cannot think what a good tempered creature she is, I don't think she *can* scratch.' 'She won't scratch you, my dear,' said he, 'you treat her too kindly for that;' and indeed I was treated kindly. There was nothing that the dear little girl thought too good for me; and indeed I loved her better than any body I have since met with, and had it been my fate, should have been glad to have remained with her till now, but alas! that was not the case."

Here poor Pussy's narration was likely

to have a speedy conclusion, for she had scarcely uttered these words when a gun was fired from the place just below them, and which, had they been nearer to it, might have ended both their lives in a moment. As it was, they were so completely frightened that they both ran away to their own home without stopping to take the least farewell of each other.

## CHAP. III.

AFTER they had a little recovered the late alarm they had received, each of our cats began to think of her companion, and both were desirous of knowing whether the other was hurt. As soon therefore as the young one could venture out again, she resolved to go to the place she had left, where she found the old Tabby quietly seated as before.

"I am glad to see you," said she; "you were not hurt I perceive by the terrible noise we heard this morning."

"No," said the other, "nor you either I hope; but I was very much frightened, I never heard such a noise before."

"For my part," said the Tabby, "I cannot think how I could be so foolish as to be so alarmed at a noise; I must own I am a little ashamed of it. Noise alone cannot hurt us."

"But there was a dreadful smoke," replied her companion, "and where there is *that* there must be fire you know; did you not see it?"

"It was *only* a gun," answered the Tabby, "I heard many such while I was in the stable I told you of; but I had almost forgotten the sound. If it is not pointed at us it can do us no harm; but can you listen to some more of my story now, or shall we find out another place to sit in? Perhaps you are afraid of hearing the same noise again if we remain here."

"No, no," said the other, "you seem to have raised my courage, as you say noise alone cannot hurt, nor smoke either; pray continue your adventures. You left off full of little Sally's kindness; but I am

afraid you were not much longer with her."

"About three months," said the Tabby, "and in that time I was so well kept and fed, that I grew quite fat, and looked so sleek and smooth that every body admired me. My dear little mistress also got much better in health, and was able to walk out a little for the air, when I used to follow her like a dog; but once my foolish fancy must lead me to go out without her, and I thought of visiting a cottage not far distant, though I had not the least intention of not returning; indeed I would not have gone on any account, if I had thought I should not have gone back again. When I entered the cottage, I meant out of vain curiosity to go to, it was Saturday, and I found the woman belonging to it in a great bustle with mops and brushes, the floor was covered with water, and she with her pattens on, scrubbing down the bricks. 'I will have no cats here,' said she, 'to

dirt my house just as I have cleaned it: Tom! Tom!' she continued calling to her son, who was a little way from the door, and perhaps turned out of the house for the same cause as I was, 'come and take away this cat, put her out of the place, I am sure she don't belong to us, and we want no animal of that kind to eat up our victuals, take her away directly;' and all this time she continued very busy at her work, and flowing the house with water, while I would gladly have ran away much faster than I went, had not the boy caught me up. 'I do think,' said he, 'this is my lady's cat which she lost some time ago, 'tis just like her; I shall get half a crown if I carry her to the great house: shall I mother?' 'I don't care what you do, so you take her away from here,' said this bustling woman. 'It is Sally King's cat,' said a neighbour's child, 'I know it is, for I have often seen her with her.' 'I don't care for that,' said the boy; 'be-

sides, it was a cat that her mother found, and how do you know that it was not my lady's; I'll be hanged if I don't carry it however.' 'And remember you bring me the money,' said his mother, calling out after him.

"With a heavy heart I was lugged in his arms to the door of a very large house which stood in a paddock, thinking all the time of my dear kind mistress, and how much she would feel at the loss of me. 'Oh, my idle curiosity!' thought I; 'how could I be so foolish as to leave her side! and how ungrateful must she think me after all her goodness.'

"When we got to my lady's, as the boy called her, he asked to speak to her maid. 'Pray is not this,' said he, 'the tabby cat my lady lost some time ago?' 'Upon my word,' said the woman, 'I believe it is the same.' Oh! how did I wish that I was able to speak to be understood by her, that I might say, 'No, I am

not, I am Sally King's cat.' However, this was impossible; and she continued, 'I will take her up stairs to her directly, how glad she will be to see her; though for my part I have no desire to see any more of such tiresome plagues brought here, we have enough of them already, she has got eight now in the room with her, though this, if it is the one she has lost, will be the greatest favorite. Stop a moment, my boy, and I will hear what she says.' So up stairs she took me, and presented me to my lady, who had no less than three cats in her lap at that time; but the moment she saw me she put them all down, and in rapture of joy screamed out, 'What! is my poor dear Tabby found!' 'I dont know Ma'am,' said the servant; 'but a boy has brought this cat here, and I think it is like her.' 'Like her!' exclaimed the old lady, 'it is her, her very self; here are all the marks which I so often have admired down her back;'



and she almost devoured me with kisses. 'The boy is waiting below to know if your ladyship is pleased to give him any thing,' said the maid. 'Oh, yes! to be sure, give him half a crown,' returned my new mistress, 'I always said I would give that to any one who would bring my poor dear Tabby home again;' and now again she caressed me, stroking and kissing me all over, while the rest of her household seemed very happy to be left without notice to lay at their ease upon the carpet. 'But my Tabby,' said she, 'I am afraid you have forgotten me, you do not sing me your pretty song as you used to do, nor seem pleased to see your mistress.' Here again I wished to speak, that I might tell her I was not the same. However, not all my silence could make her appear less pleased to see me, and I must say that I received her kindness but very ungraciously; I thought too much of my dear little Sally to do otherwise.

“ She still continued to keep me in her lap; and when all her four-footed companions were fed, which was regularly three times a day, I was honoured by being allowed to eat upon the table before her, and it was well for me that I was: though they did not want to be continually in her arms, I could see that the rest of the cats looked upon me with a jealous eye, and would, no doubt, have prevented my eating at all if it had been in their power. Of all the situations I was ever in, this was the most disagreeable, though perhaps you may think it was the best, when I tell you we each had our separate baskets to sleep in, were constantly fed, and were sure to be tenderly treated and kindly received whenever we went towards the old lady, who had an eye to us all, and made it a point that we should be taken care of. Here no dogs were allowed to come to alarm us, and every thing she thought we could want was instantly procured; nay,

victuals of the best kind was dressed for us every day. What could you possibly want then? you will say: why, liberty! We were never allowed to leave the room without some one watching to see which way we went; nor were we suffered to remain long out of it, for our old lady was seldom satisfied unless we were all with her. I had rather spend my whole time upon this sunny wall, and have my food to search after, where I could find it, than be so confined; but besides all this, we were washed once a week with a sponge and warm milk and water, to make our skins look smooth and downy. Oh, what an operation was this! I am sure I could have washed myself much better, and indeed had it to do as soon as the maid had turned me into my basket again. She used to think the same I believe, for it was in a very ill humour that she performed this office, and I do not wonder at it; we cats are not intended to be kept in

that manner, and I often wished my mistress could know that we were much better able to clean ourselves than she or her maid could do it for us. Dear little Sally never complained of my being dirty, yet she never washed me all the time I was with her."

"Nor no one else I should think," replied her attentive companion, "except such foolish old ladies as her you met with. I can scarcely help laughing at the idea of cats not being able to keep themselves clean; but go on with your narrative. You did not stay there long I imagine."

"Not a minute longer than I could help," replied the other; "but it was six weeks I think before I could make my escape. Had I staid much longer I should have lost all power of helping myself, and should have forgot the use of my claws, my tongue, and every thing else; and even should not have known how to

provide myself with necessary food, for when I came to hunt after mice again, I found it a much more difficult task than in the former part of my life. It was some time before I could recover my usual agility, or the faculty of smelling, which was formerly so strong in me."

"But how did you make your escape?" inquired the other, "that is what I so much wish to know."

"Why, one beautiful morning the window was put open to let a little air into the room," returned the Tabby, "and the thought struck me that I could get out that way without being perceived; it had often been opened before, but none of us ever attempted to reach it, nor had it ever entered my head till now. I said nothing to my companions, for as I told you, I was not very sociable with any of them; indeed we all seemed to feel the melancholy of our situation too much to take much pleasure in conversation: a few kittens would now

and then get together, and their playful gambols made us a little more cheerful; but on the whole we were in a miserable condition, notwithstanding the old lady imagined she did us such a favour by so amply providing for us. But as I was telling you, I saw the window open, and by the help of the chairs and table which stood in it, got upon its edge. Here I looked around me to see if my mistress observed my motions, but at that time she was engaged in talk with a lady who had come to visit her; and I, exerting all my powers, gave one spring, and was upon the ground in a moment, without being much hurt, or shook by the leap I had taken, and happy was I to find myself upon the grass once more. It was now the autumn, consequently very warm and comfortable out of doors; I would have made my way to little Sally again had I known any thing of the road, but I resolved as fast as I was able to get out of sight of my prison, for

in that light only could I look upon the house I had left, though I wanted nothing while there but liberty, which is to me more precious than all the rest.

“ I crept along, hiding myself among the high grass, till I was out of the paddock in which it stood, and then found myself more exposed to view, as I was in the high road; and now comes one of the worst parts of my story, for I soon met with some boys from whom I experienced the very reverse of the treatment I had fled from. I went through so much as almost to make me repent my having done so, and yet under it all I was not without hopes that I should at the last escape from them, with my life. In the first place they shod my feet with walnut-shells, and then threw me into a horse-pond in a deep muddy place; and when I came out, what with the incumbrance they had put on my feet, and the dirt and filth which stuck to my sides, I was unable to

get out of their reach. They watched for my coming, and laughed much to see the condition I was in, and thus all the effects of my lady's washing to make me smooth and downy were destroyed at once, for my skin has never since been what it was before this cruel usage; but there was still worse than this to follow; they tied a large bush to my tail, and I was obliged to drag this after me, while they kept driving me before them, some with whips, and others with stones, all the way hallooing at my heels.

“In this condition was I when a dog met us, one of my old enemies, and him they immediately made turn upon me; and now I was obliged to run still faster than before: but one or two of my new fashioned shoes dropt off in my race, and perceiving a barn at a distance, I made the best of my way to it, where finding a little opening in the door, with all my strength I pushed through it, and left the bush behind me. Here I



was out of the reach of my persecutors, as the hole was too small to admit the dog, though he used every effort in his power to follow, and continued for some time afterwards howling and barking round the place, as if unwilling to give up his prey. The boys, cruel as they were, now returned home, much pleased, I dare say, with the sport they had had, while I lay panting for breath, yet rejoicing in my security. The barn was full of corn and straw, among which I lay and rolled till I had lost a little of the mud I had brought with me from the horse-pond, but, it was several days before I could free myself entirely from it. With my teeth also I got off the shells they had put upon my feet, and thus became a little more at liberty. Here likewise I found plenty of food, for where there was so much corn, you may be sure there were a number of mice, and I lived very comfortably: true, it was a solitary life, but for a time I was satisfied with it, till my

wandering nature again stirred me up to seek another home, though at times I blamed myself for wishing to do so. 'Here,' thought I, 'I live in ease, plenty, and quiet; what can I want more?' I had liberty, also, to go in and out when I pleased, nor had I any reason to fear being turned out of it; for whenever any of the farmer's men came in, they always appeared glad to see me there, and said to each other, 'It was a good thing for them I was come, I destroyed so many mice.' But see," said this gossiping cat, "the evening is coming on very fast; I think we had better part for the present, what think you?"

"As you please," replied the other; "but I declare your story is so interesting, that I could sit all night to hear it."

"You are paying me a compliment," said the Tabby, looking very pleased; "perhaps, when you have had as many years pass over your head as I have, you

may have as many scenes to relate; remember, I shall expect to hear those you have already gone through, when I have finished my adventures, and to-morrow morning I shall resume my story."

"My adventures," said the young one, "will soon be told; however, I am bound to tell you all that has happened to me, and you may depend upon my doing so."

With this agreement they once more separated, each returning home highly pleased with the other.

## CHAP. IV.

THE next morning, when she was seated as usual on the wall, with her young companion by her side, our old Tabby thus resumed her discourse:

“ I left off last night, I believe, with telling you how I began to wish to leave the barn I lived so comfortably in the whole winter ; but, as the spring advanced, the corn began to be removed, consequently the mice did not visit it so often, and I felt my daily food diminish. Some beggars took up their abode with me, and, after a time, I determined on joining myself to them : they certainly were not such an untidy set of people as it is in general

imagined all beggars are. Two men and a woman, with three or four children, belonged to this party; both of the former were, I believe, what they professed to be, disabled seamen; though I have heard them say, many took up that character who had never been to sea in their lives, and even tied up some of their limbs, as if they were maimed, that they might appear the greater objects of compassion, but it certainly was not so with these; I do not suppose they could have worked had they been put to it. As to the support which I have heard them say the nation at large has provided for all who have been injured in its service, they, without doubt, might have had a claim upon that; but then, perhaps, liberty would have been denied them, and these men, I dare say, like myself, valued this above every thing. Be that as it may, they led very quiet orderly lives, and were in the barn every night as soon as it was dark;

when they produced the money which had been given them ; while the woman employed all her time in washing and mending the old rags which they called clothes, and teaching her children to do the same ; she taught them to read also, those that were old enough to learn, and I have no doubt but that in a few months afterwards, her two eldest gained some useful employment, as this was what she seemed anxiously to wish. What little property they had they used to hide behind the straw ; and whenever they thought they heard any of the people belonging to the barn coming, they either secreted themselves there, or made the best of their way out of it, till they were gone again ; in this way we lived some weeks : at night a good fire used to be made of the wood the children had picked up in the course of the day, and something which the men brought in was dressed hot for their supper ; I always came in for a share, nor

did any one offer to ill-treat me all the time I was with them. At length it was found out they had made the barn their retreat, and they were ordered to leave it immediately. It was not necessary to use very rough language, or to threaten them, as some of their fraternity are obliged to be treated with the constable, for they very civilly obeyed the order, and I, for the sake of the novelty, resolved to go with them for a little while. Near the entrance of the next town they pitched their tent, just within a little wood, and thus you see, from a lady's cat, shut up in a warm carpeted room, and fed with the greatest delicacies, I became a beggar's follower, with scarcely food to eat, and without any covering but a thin canvass, of which their hut was formed; but I fared as well as themselves, though I often heard the woman wish I was not there, as they had children enough to eat their victuals without me. I own I felt myself an in-

cumbrance to them, yet became so pleased with their way of life, that, had it not been for this consideration, I should not have left them. I recollected, also, that winter would be coming on, 'and then,' thought I, 'they may turn me off, when I may be less able to bear it.' I therefore resolved to take myself away, and seeing some young ladies on the road, I ventured to follow them, and boldly entered the house to which they belonged."

"I think I should have been afraid to have done this," interrupted the young one. "You might have been whipped out again, or have met with a dog to attack you on your entrance."

"But I did not," said poor Tabby; "neither was I whipped out, though I even followed them into the parlour. I fancy the strangeness of my behaviour attracted their attention, for they laughed very much as they introduced me to an old gentleman who was sitting there,



saying, 'We have brought home some company with us, Sir, and that without any invitation; here, Mrs. Puss, come forward and show yourself,' making way for me to advance. 'And pray where did you pick up this lady?' asked he, very good humouredly. 'From very genteel society, I assure you, Sir,' replied one of the ladies, 'no less than a beggar's tent, just without the town; don't you think we were highly honoured that she should leave them for us?' 'I must say,' said he, 'she has shewn her taste in so doing, and that without there being any thing very attractive in your appearance, for I doubt she fared but badly where she was.' 'And now she is come,' said one of the other ladies, 'what shall we do with her?' 'Oh, make her welcome, by all means,' returned the gentleman, 'let her have no reason to repent her choice.' I was therefore suffered to remain, and at their dinner time, the ladies cut me some meat in

a plate, which I was allowed to eat under the sideboard. 'This will do,' thought I; 'this is something like my first residence, I shall fare well here; this is better than living in a barn, and running about with beggars.' In short, I was so happy, that, in spite of my age, which was now advancing to a little more solidity, I was half inclined to play again, and run round after my tail, as in the days of my kittenhood; the gentleman and ladies laughed to see my awkward gambols.

" 'I fancy,' said they, 'Puss likes her situation very well, she seems quite delighted with the new home she has chosen for herself;' while I could scarcely forbear jumping up in their laps to convince them of it. As it was, I laid at their feet and purred as loudly as I could, which when the gentleman heard, he took me up, and sitting me on his knee, stroked me very kindly. 'No doubt,' said he, 'this cat could tell us some entertaining adventures,

if she could speak ; you might then hear what sort of a life beggars lead, Mary,' continued he, 'and judge how you should like it. When you were a child you often told me you thought you should enjoy living as they do.' 'I am a little wiser now Sir,' answered the young lady, 'though really we observed that the tent from which this lady came, looked in better order than they commonly are.' The old gentleman soon after this fell asleep, and I, feeling quite at my ease in the station he had placed me, followed his example ; nor did I wake till the tea was brought in, and I was favoured with some milk. At night I was ordered to be carried into the kitchen, and a place prepared for me to sleep in ; the servants did not treat me less kindly than their master and mistresses ; however, I knew what was for my own advantage too well to continue among them, whenever I could make my way to the parlour ; and I led a very com-

fortable happy life in this family, till a lady came to spend some time with them, and whose coming I had great reason to regret. She was no sooner arrived and seated in the parlour than she observed me. 'I hope that cat is not a favourite of your father's,' said she to the young ladies who were then in the room; 'for though it may appear foolish, and I know it is so, I cannot sit if she is allowed to continue here. You don't know how afraid I am of cats, and if she was to move towards me, I do believe I should faint.' 'What a foolish creature is this!' thought I; and with my usual folly I determined to make the experiment; but the moment I began to approach towards her; she jumped up screaming as loud as she could raise her voice, and overturned the chair in which she sat, in the haste she made towards the door. One of my mistresses caught me up and held me in her arms; but in vain were all her assurances that I would do her no harm, or

the entreaties she used for her to sit down again. 'Till I was turned out of the room,' she declared, 'she could not be composed; and if you love me,' said she, 'you will not endeavour to persuade me. I assure you I have taken a great deal of pains with myself, and every endeavour has been used to reconcile me to these animals; but I cannot overcome the fear I have of them, it is a natural aversion, and I cannot help it.' After this declaration the ladies could do no less than comply with her request; and I was ordered to be kept in the kitchen, and by no means suffered to approach the parlour while this lady was in it; though I made many attempts to get there, I was never let in except when she happened to be walking with the others. I used to be a companion for the old gentleman in their absence, and knew when he turned me out of the room it was because he expected his visitor home again."

" 'Tis singular enough," observed the

other cat, "that you and I should both have met with one who has such a strange aversion to us. In the only house that I was ever in, except that in which I was born, and the school where I am now, I was treated in the same manner; but I beg your pardon for interrupting you. When I tell my story you will hear all about it; pray proceed, did you continue long in this house?"

"More than a twelvemonth," replied the Tabby, "and here it was I first had kittens. Oh! you know nothing yet of the feelings of a mother I dare say; and therefore cannot imagine the anguish I was in when they were all taken away from me, every one of them within a week after the birth. Had this been done as soon as they were born, I could have borne it better; but after having nursed them a week, no tongue can tell what I felt! nor after such cruel treatment could I find any pleasure in remaining in this house. As soon as my

excessive grief would let me move, I went mewling into every room, and finding nothing of my dear children, I determined to leave the place which every moment reminded me of them. The parlour, as I said before, I was now seldom allowed to enter, and therefore without taking leave of any one, I went out of the back door, and through the garden, not without a secret hope that I might meet with my beloved kittens in some of the out-houses which were near it, for I then thought no one could have been so cruel as to destroy them all; but this I have since found is often done to our harmless offspring: such is the usage we meet with from men, in return for our services and the regard we often express toward them! I went from house to house carefully looking into every place in which I thought they might be concealed, till in a little shed, at some distance from the house I had left, I perceived some kittens in a basket the colour

of mine. Oh! how my heart beat as I sprung towards it; but before I had reached them their mother observed my approach, and flying upon me, I was nearly killed for my temerity. 'Oh!' said I to her as soon as she would let me speak, 'pardon my rashness, indeed I meant not to hurt your kittens, I know too well the tenderness of a mother to do so, I vainly hoped they might be those I have lately lost, but I perceive my mistake. You are the happy mother of these, nor would I wish to deprive you of them;' and the tears rolled down my cheeks as I spoke. All her fury was quieted in an instant, and, seeing my distress, she tenderly endeavoured to comfort me, and even made me the offer of assisting her in nursing these young ones. This I gladly accepted, and soon became as fond of them as I had been of my own. When those who came to bring her food saw our unanimity, and how well we agreed in attending our mutual charge,



they seemed quite astonished, and many of their neighbours were called to observe this surprising event, 'how their cat had admitted a strange Tabby into her basket, and allowed her to share in the pleasure of nursing her little ones;' and certainly it was something very extraordinary, for till then, I did not even suppose I could have loved any one's kittens but my own, or suffer any one to touch those which I had brought into the world."

While our narrator was thus pursuing her adventures, a mouse appeared in the gutter of a house just before them.

"Do you see that mouse?" whispered the young one to her, "shall we not have a run for it? I am willing to try my skill in catching it with you, but as you are so much older, it would become me to give it up. Will you then seize upon it yourself? or shall I bring it to you?"

"You are very civil indeed," replied

the Tabby, rather nettled at this offer, as she thought it implied that she was unable to take it herself; "but I would have you know," added she, "I am as well able to catch mice as yourself, a pretty many more than you have I caught in my life, and so I believe I shall continue to do; but as you saw it first, you have I think the greatest right to it, pray therefore catch it for yourself, and eat it when you have done."

"I beg your pardon," said the young one, "I meant not to offend; but since you give me leave I must begin the attack, I am too impatient for so delicious a morsel to let it escape me."

With these words she leapt from the wall, while the old Tabby watched her motions, and inwardly laughed at the chase the mouse was likely to lead her. 'Though she seemed to think it such an easy prey,' said she to herself, 'I believe she will find herself mistaken;' and

seeing her run from gutter to gutter till quite out of sight, she concluded that she would join her no more that day, therefore slowly returned home.

## CHAP. V.

"You were a little disappointed," said the old cat smiling, when she met her companion the next morning, "at not finding the mouse so soon caught as you imagined; were not you? Did it answer your trouble at last? I hope you found it a delicious morsel?"

"Don't laugh at me," said the other, "I must confess I did not catch it at all, for it escaped under the tiling of one of the houses, and I had my race for nothing. It was not without difficulty I found my way to my own home afterwards, where my little friend sat watching my approach."

"You will allow then," replied the Tabby, "that you boasted too soon; well, in compassion to you, I will say no more about it, but proceed in my tale.

"I continued to take my share in nursing the kittens I mentioned, till they grew beyond our care, and appeared to lose all regard for either their mother or me; but it was not so in respect to ourselves, as we continued to feel the same friendship which we had so suddenly formed. There was no act of kindness which we did not shew each other, till we were separated by the mistress of the house. Not choosing to keep two cats, she presented my friend to an acquaintance at a distance, to whom she was carried in a bag, that she might not find her way back again. Thus I became, unintentionally I am sure, her supplanter, and was made to take her station, though I should have been much more happy to have had her company, and would gladly have gone with only half a

meal for that comfort. I never knew what became of her afterwards, but sometimes think you may be her daughter, for I have often been struck with the likeness you bear to her."

"That is impossible for me to say," replied the young one, "as I know not where my mother had lived before I came into the world, or where she is now; but if you will let me bear her place in your affections, I shall think myself very happy."

"Ah, my dear!" answered the Tabby, "your age will not suit with mine so well as that of the friend I lost; but I shall be happy to shew you any kindness in my power, and if by hearing my story you learn not to give way to a wish of changing your situation when you are well off, I shall already have been of service to you, for to this I may attribute most of the misfortunes I have met with."

"I thank you very heartily," rejoined

her companion ; “ but will you proceed in it ; surely you cannot have many more adventures to relate ? ”

“ No,” replied the other, “ I am nearly come to the conclusion of them, for I left not the house I am now speaking of till I was obliged to it, and then came to that in which I now am. I continued to live with this family, not as a parlour cat, but was as much without the door as within it---well treated, and well fed. Here also I had kittens twice, and enjoyed the delightful pleasure of nursing them as I liked ; for I kept them so secretly, that none knew that I had them till they were able to provide for themselves. As I said before, you yet know nothing of the cares of a mother, therefore cannot here enter into my feelings. While I had these to attend to, my whole time and thoughts were employed ; I dreaded every noise I heard, lest it should be some one coming to take them away ; and to supply them

with food I gladly went without any myself, sometimes for days together; for every nice morsel I picked up, and which I thought their tender teeth could bite, I carried to them. This I do not say to speak in my own praise, for I believe every mother would do the same, and I am sure it was far more gratifying to me than eating any thing myself. Oh, with what pleasure did I see them open their eyes and stretch out their little legs to attempt to crawl! When I was away from them, which at times I was obliged to be, I was never easy if out of their hearing, and the feeblest of their cries in a moment brought me back again, having once felt the misery of returning to the basket in which they were left, and finding them all gone, (I mean the first kittens I had). I was now very careful to prevent any one's knowing where I had secreted these, and often have I directed my steps quite the contrary way to where they were, if I



thought I saw any body watching me, though my heart was aching to be with them at the same time; but I am happy to say I had not that cruel trial to suffer again, I preserved both my litters till they no longer needed my affection. While I was nursing my last, I perceived a great bustle in the house whenever I visited it, but was too much engaged, thinking of my young ones, to pay much attention to it, till going one day I found every door shut, and no other way for me to enter but by the sink-hole. When I got in I was still more surprised to find all the furniture taken out of the rooms, and nothing but the bare walls left. It was well that my kittens were nearly old enough to leave me, for it now became difficult to procure them food; I was obliged to beg or steal whatever I could find that they could eat, and to leave them much longer than I liked while seeking their food. The scanty provision which it was now in

my power to bring them, soon made them more desirous of shifting for themselves, and we took our leave of each other before the usual time of parting ; but I did not fear their wanting any thing, I had instructed them very carefully, and taught them the best method of providing for themselves ; besides, they were all strong and hearty, that I doubt not they made out very well. After they were gone, I began to think of myself, and I had become so attached to the walls of this place, having brought up so many kittens in it, that I was very unwilling to leave it, and continued there some time in hopes another family would take possession of it ; but it still remained empty, and I was obliged to go farther. The mice also forsook the house when the inhabitants were gone, and I was in great danger of being starved, therefore felt myself obliged once more to seek another home. I travelled over the tops of houses till I jump't into

a little yard belonging to the one of which I am now an inmate, and this was about three months ago. The moment little George saw me, he cried to have me given to him ; he was not old enough to speak plainly. ‘Pussy, pussy, mammy,’ was all he could say ; while I, feeling the pressing calls of hunger, and in hopes of having something to eat, suffered myself to be put into his arms, and lay very quietly till his mother took me away that he might have his dinner ; and I had mine at the same time, which I enjoyed very much, for I had not eaten what could be called a good meal for several weeks. ‘Here,’ thought I, ‘I had better stay, this child cannot hurt me much, and for his sake I may be kindly treated. Mice here also may perhaps be plentiful ; surely I have had enough of running about from place to place, to remain content when I have a good house over my head, and am likely to find as much as I want.’ And

thus," continued she, "I am come to the conclusion of my adventures for the present; and now you know all I have gone through, you will not, I think, wonder why I do not leave the place I am in, or that I do not like to do things in a hurry; I might to be sure better myself by so doing, but I might also be in a much worse situation. Will you not allow that to be with the beggars, or to meet with worrying boys, or dogs, which I have told you of; the stable, or even the old lady's cat repository, would either of them be worse?"

"They certainly would," replied the other, "and I am much obliged for the information your history has afforded me respecting the conduct I am to pursue, and the events I am likely to meet with in my future life. To-morrow, if you please, I will relate what little has befallen me, and the scenes I have passed through, they are trifling when compared with

your's, which I hope I shall never forget; yet I sometimes think myself unfortunate in not having met with a friend more able to afford me assistance than dear little Ferdinand, for that is his name; but for the future I will not complain, for what have I suffered in comparison of you?"

With these words they parted, the old Tabby wishing her all safety, and promising to meet her the next day.

## CHAP. VI.

ONCE more our four-footed moralizer, the old Tabby, welcomed her young friend to the sunny wall where they had so often met.

"You are come," said she, "with all your wit about you I hope, and your memory well stored with what has happened to you; I am impatient to hear all you have to tell me, and do not doubt my being an attentive listener."

"You are very good," replied the other; "yet I cannot say but I feel rather discouraged at the idea of relating to one so much wiser than myself the playful tricks of my kittenhood; but I am bound

by the confidence you have placed in me; and the entertainment I have received from your adventures, to do as you desire, and therefore, without farther apology, I will begin the account of my short life.

“I was brought into the world in the house of an old woman who kept what is called a green grocer’s shop, her trade was not very extensive, nor had she more than herself and my mother and me to provide for out of it; and it was well she had not, for she used to appear as full of care, and to have as much business upon her hands, as if she had the accounts of the largest shop in town to settle. My mother was her chief companion, a very grave old cat, and so used to all the ways of her mistress, that they seemed absolutely necessary to each other. The old woman could never sit down comfortably to her meals unless my mother was at her elbow; and for her sake I believe it was that she took great notice of me, and would have

treated me much more kindly than she did, had I not been the most mischievous creature that ever breathed. I confess I was very troublesome to her, for she never left any thing within my reach, but if it were in my power I tossed it about, and put it all out of its place, not that I wished to do her, or any thing that belonged to her any harm. It was the exceeding playfulness of my disposition, and I had nothing else to amuse me; for whenever I attempted to play with my mother, she would gently push me from her, and, closing her eyes, turn her back upon me, as if ashamed of my behaviour; yet if she thought any one was going to do me an injury, she would presently let them know that she would not allow it. But I have not entered upon my tale so methodically as you told your's: I should have said, that while I was a very little kitten she took every possible care of me, and treated me with the utmost regard.



Her old mistress also was careful that she should want for nothing, but brought her plenty of food and milk every day, so that she scarcely ever was obliged to leave me, and these were some of the happiest hours of my life ; yet when I came to get about, and could in a manner provide for myself, she soon forgot the tender affection she had once shewn me, and the old woman again seemed to be the chief object of her attention. They were closely attached to each other, and I will venture to say, my mother never did any thing she thought her mistress would not approve ; but I, as I said before, was the most mischievous creature living. Whenever I got into the shop, I used to jump about among the cabbages and carrots, roll the turnips and potatoes from one end to the other, and even the little crockery she sometimes sold did not escape my notice ; I was up upon the shelves in an instant, and many

a cup and saucer have I broken in these frisky humours.

“ Whenever she came in and saw the mischief I had done, she would fret and scold at me, which, I am sorry to say, I paid little attention to, for I did not then understand what she meant; but out of regard to my mother she forbore to chastise me in any other way than by keeping me out of the shop as much as was in her power, and this was punishment sufficient for me, for there it was I found my greatest entertainment. This old lady was very fond of knitting, and whenever she was called into the shop in a hurry, which was often the case, and left her work on the table, I was after it the moment she was out of the room; and when she returned, she generally found her ball of worsted rolled to the farther end of it, twisted and twirled round half a dozen chairs, and unless I happened to break the thread which

held it, I dragged the stocking, or whatever she was about, after me, much pleased with my plaything. Oh! how angry she used to be, while I used to think it the finest fun imaginable. If she was reading, and had taken her spectacles off to attend to the shop, I either was sure to push them on the floor, at the great risk of breaking the poor old woman's eyes, or else turn over all the leaves of the book she was looking at, till she was puzzled to find out the page she had left. Sometimes she would borrow the newspaper of one of her neighbours, and if ever I could get that into my possession, I would tear it into a hundred bits. In short, I continued these tricks till she could no longer bear with me, and observing that my mother took no farther notice of me, she one day fairly turned me out of doors, and bade me 'Go and find some other person to plague and torment, for I had been a trouble to her long enough.'

"The being thus treated was very little vexation to me, I felt as happy as ever I did in my life, and not knowing any thing of what I was to expect, I considered the world as all before me, and that I had liberty to go where I liked. As for food I was not afraid of wanting that, for thought I, 'Mice are every where to be found, and what do I want besides?' I perceive your smile at my thoughtless disposition," observed she to her grave companion; "but remember that I was then much younger and more frisky than I am now."

"'Tis enough to make even such an old cat as I am laugh to hear your simplicity," said the Tabby; "but I believe all kittens think alike when first they enter into life. Well, pray continue your story; into what house did you intrude yourself next? I suppose that wherever you went you expected they would be glad to see you."

"I found myself terribly mistaken," answered the young one; "for I had no sooner made my appearance in the first house that I entered afterwards, than I was met by a gentleman who started back, as if he had seen something most terrific in my appearance, like the lady you formerly alarmed so. I found he had a natural aversion to cats, and calling to his servant, he ordered him to put me out of doors directly, and if I came in again I was to be killed. You may suppose I was as much frightened as himself, as his behaviour was so contrary to what I had expected. I therefore suffered myself to be taken up very quietly, and when put without the house, made no attempt to enter it again. I began now to be somewhat hungry, for my former mistress had kept me so well fed, notwithstanding my ill treatment of her, that I had not been used to go so long without food, and therefore began searching for a mouse or two in

some of the out-houses I was among, but not one could I find. I had received such a rebuff, in the only place I had entered, where I thought it likely to have food given me, that I did not care to venture into any other, and therefore passed all that night without any thing to eat, and with nothing to lie upon but the bare bricks of a little shed at the bottom of the garden belonging to the school-house where I now am. Here I spent the next day also, and began to think it was not so easy or so pleasant to provide for myself as I had imagined. When I was almost famished, a mouse passed before me, the hunger I felt gave strength to my endeavours, and I was so fortunate as to catch it without much trouble; after a time another came in my way, and I ate that also: my hopes now revived, and I concluded that I should not be starved to death this time, and taking courage I proceeded to the house, not quite certain of meeting

with a welcome reception. However, I found nobody there so much afraid of me as the gentleman I formerly frightened, I saw only the servants, and for some time no one noticed me, till at dinner I ventured to put myself in their way. 'Is this our cat?' said the cook; 'no, that it is not: where did she come from I wonder?' 'It is not ours,' returned another maid, as she looked at me; 'but it may be one of her kittens,' continued she, 'as she is but young, and perhaps is come to supply the place of her mother, for I do not think *she* will ever come back again, the boys treated her so cruelly; if this will stay let us keep her, for I am sure we want a cat bad enough, the mice are already got so troublesome.'

"After this conversation they gave me something to eat, and which I very thankfully received. In the evening I quickly caught a great many mice, three or four of which I brought and laid at the feet of

the cook, not doubting it would increase her favour towards me. She commended me very much, patted me on the head, and seemed to congratulate herself on having such an addition to her household. I spent a week or two very comfortably here, as it was the time of the holidays, and I did not know what I was to expect when the boys came back to school, though the servants used to talk of the time with dread, and often expressed no small apprehension for me. 'She will not stay,' said one, 'I am afraid after they are come;' and indeed I should not have done so, had it not been for little Ferdinand; but, as I have told you, he has gained such an hold upon my affections, that I cannot think of leaving him---poor fellow! I saw him when he was brought to school, he was almost the first boy that came, and his mother with him in a post-chaise; I was sitting on the low wall before the house as the carriage drove up to



the door, and marked the dejected looks of each while the dear little boy wiped his eyes and endeavoured to hide his tears, and his mother also seemed to have as great a struggle to conceal her's. I was so much interested by their appearance, that when they came out of the house again, I followed them into the playground, to which the master led them. Here the lady expressed herself perfectly satisfied with every thing she had seen; but I observed the tender looks she cast towards her child, while he with tears in his eyes held her hand as if he never could part with it. When the horses were sufficiently rested, the carriage was ordered for her to return home, and it was impossible not to feel for both. 'I shall write to you very soon, my dear Ferdinand, and come to see you before it is long,' said she, as she kissed his trembling lips, 'be a good boy, and let me hear a good account of you from your master, you know nothing

can give me greater pleasure.' 'Dear, dear mamma!' was all he could say; but again wiping his eyes, he exerted all his powers to conceal what he felt. 'My dear child,' said she, again kissing him, 'you behave nobly, you are imparting courage to me,' while a tear stood on her cheek as she said it; 'be a good boy, and be assured I love you dearly.' All this time he held her hand tight in his, often attempting to speak, but the words died upon his lips, till she hurried away, seemingly unable to say more. The poor little fellow followed her to the carriage, and when he saw it drive away, held out his hand, as if he would have given the world to be in it with her; then avoiding the notice of every other person, he ran into the play-ground, and sitting down at the foot of the great tree I told you of, he gave free vent to his grief. I could not but feel for him, and tried, by every method in my power, to let him know that I did so.

At length he seemed sensible of my intention, and laying his face upon my back, he wetted me with his tears; till taking some cakes out of his pocket, 'Here Puss,' said he, 'you shall have some of this, but I cannot let you have much, for my dear mother gave it me;' and again the tears rolled down his cheeks at the remembrance. I licked his hand, and as well as I was able, endeavoured to express my thankfulness for his offer; but I did not wish to touch what he so much valued. He seemed quite pleased with my attention, and kissing me, said very tenderly, 'Will you be my friend, Pussy? I shall have no one here like those I loved at home.' I answered him as well as I could, by loudly purring and rubbing my head against his knees; nor did I leave him till the dinner bell rang, and the gentleman, who was the master of the school, came out, and with many kind words, offered to take him into the eating-room.

“ For several days afterwards all his leisure time was spent with me, he appeared in some measure to have forgot his sorrow, and we began to play together ; when he received a letter from his mother, he told me of it, as if he thought I should feel as much pleasure as himself, though he did not think that I could understand him. From the other boys I often experience very ill treatment, as I have told you before, but in general I keep out of their sight ; 'tis only to this dear little fellow, who continues my firm friend, that I shew myself at all times, and I am like him, looking forward to the promised visit of his mother. Indeed, I am not without hopes,” added she, with a look of great pleasure, “ that when the holidays come round again, I shall have the happiness of going home with him, and then I shall indeed be taken care of, and shall think myself one of the most fortunate of my kind !”

"I do not think it at all unlikely," replied the Tabby, "and heartily wish, for your sake, it may be so. Pray remember my advice, and never forsake the friend you have found, from a vain curiosity to see more of the world; believe me, there is nothing very desirable in it."

"I am willing to think so now," returned the other; "and while little Ferdinand continues to have any regard for me, I must feel the same for him."

"He may now be looking for you," said the Tabby, "for it is past twelve o'clock, do not let me keep you from him; I am much obliged to you for your communication, and shall always be glad to hear of your welfare. Sometime hence, perhaps, we may meet again, and consequently shall have much more to relate to each other; at present, I think, we had better not come so frequently together in this place, for I am afraid some idle boys

will observe our stated times, and invent some method of disturbing us."

"Very true," replied the other, "nothing is more likely; for the present then, farewell! We are not at such a distance from each other, but we may now and then meet in other places. Be assured, I shall not forget the counsel you have given me, or be unmindful of it."

"You are very welcome, my dear," answered the Tabby, in an affectionate tone, "I wish it may be of service to you;" and thus taking leave of each other, they retired to their separate habitations.

END OF PART I.

THE  
**HISTORY OF TIB;**  
OR,  
THE ADVENTURES  
OF  
**POOR PUSS,**  
WITH AN ACCOUNT OF HER DEATH.

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**PART II.**

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**CHAP. I.**

My readers may remember the young Kitten whose adventures were just began when the old Tabby had to all appearance nearly finished her career, and from what was there related, will, it is hoped, be induced to bestow an hour or two in perusing this account of the sequel of them. They will also probably wish to hear something more of poor Puss, whose misfor-

tunes in life, and the various scenes she had passed through, made her so capable of giving good counsel to the young and thoughtless. But how few are there who profit by the caution of others! their own experience can alone teach them that it would be best so to do, and this is generally dear bought. So found our young Kitten, whom for the future I shall call Tib; for so did little Ferdinand name the faithful friend, whose kind attention to him, during his first distress at parting from his mother on coming to school, so won his heart, that for a time he thought he never could forget her: but my young readers are impatient to begin her farther history, and I will detain them no longer, but conduct them to the sunny wall on which, for nearly five years after she had parted from her youthful companion, the grave old Tabby continued to spend an hour or two each day, wrapt in silent meditation, and reflecting on the changes she daily



saw. Even in herself she perceived an alteration, by which she knew the lapse of time; she was grown quite gray, her eyes were almost dim, nor did she find herself as able to catch mice as formerly. Daily did she rejoice that the ill treatment she at first received from George had not induced her once more to change her situation. The little boy was now grown older, and, as if to reward her for her submission to him in his infancy, took particular care that she should want nothing he could give her. She was always called George's cat, and, from her advanced age and even temper, was respected by the whole family.

"Here," thought she, "I can enjoy all that can be enjoyed at my years, kind treatment and plenty of food; and while my legs can bring me to this favourite spot, I cannot but be thankful. From the changes I have noticed in the neighbourhood, and the growth of George, I am

convinced I am much older than when relating my adventures in this place to the young Kitten, and to whom then I was as a grandmother; but what would she think of me now," said she to herself, "were we to meet again?"

"Alas! -what would you think of me?" replied a voice, of which the good old Tabby thought she had a slight remembrance; but on looking from whence it came, she perceived so miserable an object, that pity, rather than surprise, was excited. A poor thin cat approached, whose tail dragged mournfully behind her; her eyes were sunk in her head, and her ears hanging over her face, while the hairs on her back were so few that they might have been numbered.

"No, no;" said she, "my ears deceive me, I forget that I am nearly deaf; this cannot be the voice of the gay young Kitten I was just thinking of. But who are you, friend?" continued she, "can I

be of any service or comfort to you? 'tis true I am old, but something is yet in my power; I have been in as bad circumstances as you now appear to be in, and yet have lived till this time."

"Do you not know me then?" returned poor Tib in a low voice, for it was none other. "But how can I ask this question? it is impossible you should, not one of my friends could recollect me now."

"Are you then my old companion?" exclaimed the reverend Tabby, whose eyes, while she felt for the situation she saw her in, bore witness to the pleasure this unexpected meeting gave her. "My dear friend, come to my heart," said she, "I have yet some warmth left there, come take the place by my side which you occupied so many years ago; let us try if we can again recal those days, and forget your present sorrows."

Such affectionate language quite over-

came the melancholy object of her kindness, and leaning her head against the back of her old friend, the tears gushed from her eyes at the sudden pleasure she experienced.

"Oh happy days!" said she, "never, I fear, to be recalled; but let me not complain. Do I not again see you, my monitor, my friend! how little did I expect this pleasure! I came to the wall, not with a hope of seeing one whom I thought must long ago have been laid in the peaceful grave, but I thought in this place I could recollect your life and adventures, and perhaps draw consolation from the recollection; for often have I reflected on them, and in many circumstances of my life I have said, this is not so bad as what my dear old friend experienced; but you have, I hope, gone through no more such scenes, your latter days I trust have been spent happily?"

"What! still so anxious to hear of

me?" replied the Tabby in a cheerful tone; "I am happy I am not forgotten by you, and rejoice to tell you that my close of life is likely to be peaceful, and in the same family in which you left me when last we parted. 'Tis true I am older, many years I should suppose, but I know but little of time; lately my years and days have been so uniformly spent, that I scarcely notice their departure, except from the growth of George, who still continues my master, and is now my best friend, and the alterations in the neighbourhood; but to see you again would make me almost fancy no time has elapsed, did I not perceive so visible a change in your appearance."

My readers will observe that the old Tabby, though increased in years, and consequently in wisdom, (if cats could improve after arriving at a certain degree of knowledge, or rather instinct) had not lost her love of talking; of this, if possi-

ble, she was more fond than in her youth, but as it is generally what is ascribed to old age, it cannot now be wondered at.

“ But tell me,” continued she, “ what place do you now call your home? is Ferdinand still your friend? perhaps long before this he has forgotten that he ever was fond of you; such is the friendship of man, particularly to animals.”

“ Oh, do not blame that dear boy!” answered Tib; “ though it is many years since I have seen him, I cannot but believe that he retains for me a part of that affection I still feel towards him; the many scenes which I have been through since, has not erased from my memory his kind and tender treatment of me.”

“ I must hear all your story,” replied the old cat, “ you will I know relate it to me; for though I feel myself to have quite done with the world at large, and even with those of my own race, I would wish to have no intercourse, I cannot be

uninterested in what concerns you. Though deaf and dim-eyed, I can still prick up my ears to hear your tale, and my eyes shall, I hope, soon see the alteration a little attention from me, and the good living to which I will introduce you, shall make in you. Come, come, my friend, cheer up and hope for better days, you have many years yet to live, and may never again be in the condition you are now."

"I am so weak," said poor Tib, "from want of victuals and the hard usage I have met with, that I know not that I can relate it to you; but if ever I am able, our former friendship and your present kindness fully claims it, and it will be a relief to my wounded feelings, to relate to you what I have gone through."

"I do not ask it now," said her compassionate friend; "but have you been long without food? your miserable appearance bespeaks it, and you must attri-

bute my want of attention to my vast age, which makes me very forgetful; indeed the sight of you has put every thing else out of my mind: but do not doubt my regard, come along with me directly, I would not wish you to speak a word till you have been a little refreshed. No doubt, George has put some milk and something for me to eat in the usual place, and you shall share it with me, or have it all if you can eat it; perhaps, also, when my little friend has seen you, he may feel as much for you as Ferdinand once did, and when I am dead, you may supply my place."

"Oh do not talk of dying," replied poor Tib, "I cannot bear the thought of parting from you, and still stand much in need of your friendly counsel."

"But come my friend," interrupted the Tabby, "do not frighten yourself, I do not think I am going to leave you in possession of my situation; yet, at least I'll try and



make your appearance a little more becoming so comfortable a home before I resign it to you. Once more I beg you to come with me, and I'll endeavour to prove my regard for you by something more than words." And putting on a brisker motion than usual, she led the way, which for so many years she had travelled backwards and forwards; while her almost famishing friend followed as quickly as her trembling limbs would allow, rejoicing in having met with such an unlooked-for relief.

When they arrived upon the wall of the little court, and on which the old Tabby was first noticed by George—"Can you," said she, "jump from this place? formerly I need not have asked you this question, but I will shew you the easiest way of getting down, and already see what will amply repay you for the exertion. Look in that shed there, do you not see a plate of meat and some milk by it?"

"Oh, yes! yes!" answered Tib, "and my heart beats to get at it; pray go on, I am sure I can follow you." And so saying, they both leaped on the ground, where poor Tib partook of the most refreshing and welcome meal she had ever tasted in her life.

"To eat it with you," said she to her kind friend, "gives me double pleasure."

"To see you enjoy it," replied the other, "affords me the same; and now let me shew you a place where on some clean straw you may rest your weary limbs in safety, but we must go a little farther off for this. Here," said she, when she had conducted her to a warehouse a few doors distant, "you may lie in peace till I come again to you. Come, come," continued she, observing her friend smile at the comfortable retreat she had looked her out, "I see you are better already, I shall live to see you quite well, your hairs will soon grow, and you will be as smooth and as

handsome as ever. You shall not give me any account of your life now, as I fear your being again exhausted, and I may be inquired after at home; however, I am glad to leave you in better spirits than when I found you: let me see you lie down comfortably, and now farewell, my friend, and expect to see me again in a few hours."

"Farewell, my dear friend," returned Tib, her eyes glistening with gratitude, "accept a thousand thanks for your very kind treatment."

"Say no more on that subject," answered the Tabby, and hurried home to her own habitation; while poor Tib laid down, and endeavoured to forget her sorrows in a few hours sleep.

## CHAP. II.

AFTER sitting for about half an hour on George's knee when he returned from school in the afternoon, and partaking of his tea and bread and butter, the old Tabby hastened away to her sick friend, hoping to find her refreshed and free from pain.

"How are you now," said she, on observing her open her eyes at her approach;

"have you had any sleep?"

"Oh yes!" replied Tib, "and I have dreamt of catching mice as formerly I was able to do."

"So you will again, my dear," returned the Tabby, looking very good humouredly, "and if you like, you shall now and then bring me one or two by way of a treat. I

shall not now be so proud as to refuse the offer you once made of catching one for me."

"You have not forgotten that," said Tib, "nor have I. I recollect also that I could not catch it after all, though I was so very ready to offer it to you. It was presumptuous in me to suppose you could not have taken it for yourself, had you wished it."

"I dare say," observed the Tabby, "you could eat one now if you had it, and if I thought that I should succeed any better than you then did, I would make you the same offer; but my old limbs will not now carry me after such nimble creatures. However, if I see one napping, you shall be sure to have it; I stand some chance of catching them then."

"Thank you, thank you, my friend," said Tib, "but pray do not fatigue yourself on my account, the food you have given me to-day has done me much

good ; I carry at my tongue's end, I know, a sovereign remedy for all my wounds, and shall shortly be able to use it."

"Would you not like a little more milk this evening?" asked Tabby ; "if you should, and could again go home with me, I do not doubt our finding some."

"I will endeavour to follow you," replied Tib, "though my limbs after this rest seem more stiff than before ; but I am so very thirsty that I shall be glad to drink, even if it be only water."

On hearing this, the old Tabby once more conducted her friend to her usual eating place, where her kind master had already placed another saucer of milk. With this poor Tib quenched her extreme thirst, and then, not allowing her friend to attend her, she crept back to the lodging her kindness had pointed out ; and here she laid very comfortably till the next morning, when some men came into the

warehouse with a large quantity of goods just unpacked from a waggon.

"What shall I do now?" thought she, "am I never to find a place of refuge? I cannot conceal myself from these men, and they may renew all my misery."

Her fears were so great that she could not help loudly crying as they passed through her mind, and by so doing, she was soon discovered by the objects of her dread.

"What, have we got a cat laid up in store for us?" said one; "let us look at her:" and on perceiving the miserable state she was in, observed, that "so large a place would not have been necessary for one so thin."

"It seems the warehouse has a long time been empty of all but her," said another, "for by her looks she has been the only thing kept here."

"And very badly kept too," replied the other, laughing at his great wit; "I

hope what we put in will better credit its keeping. Come, Mrs. Puss," continued he, "you must turn tail and be off, make room for something more fit for this place than yourself."

With these words he was thoughtlessly going to exercise a whip he had in his hand, when the other stopped his arm by saying, "Don't strike her, poor thing, she looks miserable enough, and half starved."

"But what a lazy creature she must have been," replied he, "to have lain here so long without endeavouring to look out a better situation; why, she seems as if she had eaten the hairs from her back for food, rather than to seek for better at a distance:" and again he laughed at what he thought an exceeding funny remark.

"She might not have been able to get out," returned his companion; "but she seems glad enough to be off now, for she is running away as fast as she can—pray let her alone, and let her depart quietly."



"Ah! how little do you know of me," thought poor Tib, as she mournfully withdrew; "how glad should I be to remain in peace and quiet here. But what will my dear old friend do when she comes to seek me, and does not find me? I hope these men will not observe her, for if they do, I tremble for the consequence; they were angry enough at my being here, and when they see her also, they will surely think the place infested with cats, and perhaps kill her."

With these heart-rending fears poor Tib could scarcely move; yet so eager was she to get out of their sight, that she could not stand still to consider what was best to be done, whether to return to the house in which Tabby dwelt, or go to the sunny wall where she should be sure to meet with her some part of the day.

While she was thus ruminating, she lifted up her eyes and perceived her old friend some way off, slowly moving to-

wards the place she had left ; but how to get at her she knew not, as many walls were between them, and her voice was too feeble to be heard at that distance.

“ I will go back,” said she, “ and share her fate, whatever it is ; she shall not suffer alone, and through kindness to me ;” and turning round, she once more hastened to the spot she had but just before been so desirous of quitting. The waggon was still standing at the door when she reached it, and she feared the men had not quitted the warehouse. Whether her friend had entered she could not tell, as the buildings between them had prevented her observing the progress she had made towards it.

“ Shall I go in again,” continued she within herself, “ and run the risk of being seen ? but had my friend been there, no doubt the men would have seen and turned her out, and I should have heard their cruel shouts.”

While these were her thoughts, the old Tabby made her appearance.

"What now?" said she with great surprise; "were you going to run away before I came? so well recovered already?"

"Don't speak so loud," replied Tib, "I have been turned out, and am miserable with the apprehension of our being both cruelly used, and perhaps killed; pray come away as fast as you can, for there is great danger in staying here."

"What can you mean?" replied her friend, quite bewildered by her alarm, "surely you have been dreaming again, and don't know what you are talking of. I assure you, I would not have brought you to a place of danger; I know that this place has been unoccupied a great while, and not a single creature comes near it."

"That may have been," said Tib, "but I assure you it is not so now; don't you

see the waggon which has brought some goods, they are now putting away within? Pray, pray, come away."

"Don't be in such a hurry," said the Tabby, beginning to perceive her mistake, "I will come as fast as I am able; the men will do nothing to us so long as we are out of their way, they must be too busy about their own concerns to think of mischief at this time, fond as they may be of it at others. I was coming to invite you to breakfast, are you not hungry? However, I am glad I am spared the cruel fright I should have been in," continued she, "had I come and found you gone from hence, and not knowing where."

"I have been away some distance already," returned Tib; "but on coming to a place from whence I could see you a good way off, and thinking you were coming here, I determined to return again and meet you, that I might at least save you all the alarm I could."

"Alas!" said the Tabby, "though they praise me at home so much for my even temper, I find my hastiness still continues. I thought quite otherwise when we met, and that now you were a little better, you were withdrawing yourself from me; but I beg your pardon, come, pray return with me, and let us have some breakfast together, and then, if you please, we will once more take our old station, and you shall, if you are able, relate to me what has happened to you since we last conversed together there."

The two friends slowly moved towards the habitation of the Tabby, and in the shed, in which they had before found so seasonable a meal, they now met, with plenty for them both; and after enjoying a quiet and comfortable breakfast, they repaired to the well-known wall.

"Here," said the Tabby, "I hope we shall be able to sit without alarm, for at least an hour or two. Well, how are

you my friend?" patting the foot of Tib which was next her, "does not this warm sun and the good meal we have had, revive you? a swealed cat they say is better than she looks for, and such may now be said of you I hope," continued she with a smile.

"I believe it may," answered Tib, returning her smile, "and perhaps it was to try the truth of this assertion I was made to suffer what I have lately gone through; but I will endeavour to think of other things, it is time enough to relate to you this piece of cruelty when my tale is nearly ended, at present I feel too much the sad effects of it.

You may remember when last we parted, I was left in the school-house just across there, happy in the friendship of dear little Ferdinand, and not without hopes that when the holidays arrived, I should go home with him—but this was too great a pleasure. I continued to see

him every day as I told you, till the end of the half year when his mother's servant came to fetch him home. 'Tib,' said he to me, 'I go home to-morrow, and shall see my dear mamma, but I shall not forget you;' and then he gave me an affectionate squeeze in his arms, and added, 'I hope I shall find you here when I come back; I am sure the maid will take care of you; and all the boys will go at the same time; so that at least you will be safe from them.' All this he thought I could not understand; but oh! if I could have made him comprehend my meaning as well as I did his, I should have said, 'pray take me with you,' for my heart was ready to break at the thought of parting. However, I saw him get into the chaise the next morning without his seeing me; for though I had seated myself upon the wall, hoping to feel his gentle stroke upon my back once more before he went, the first boys that came

out perceived me; and, setting up a great shout, they drove me from my station in a moment, and it was only through a hole in the lower part of it that I could see my young friend depart. He looked too happy to be thinking of me at that time, and I rejoiced to see him so; and that I might not feel his absence too keenly, resolved to make my way to the kitchen, and get into favour with the cook as much as I could.

“ ‘ Well, I declare one would think the cat had sense enough to know the boys were all gone,’ said she, on seeing me enter; ‘ see here, she is come in as bold as a lion as soon as ever the last chaise is gone from the door, poor thing! she has seldom shewn her face beyond the scullery for the last six months, but now, if I can keep her, she shall have five or six weeks peace and comfort however;’ and so saying, she cut me a large plate full of



victuals, and was as good as her word to me during the holidays. I was her chief companion, as most of her fellow-servants had obtained leave from their mistress to visit their friends, and for some time we were alone in the house.

“ You can hardly imagine what a change the absence of the boys made in it ; all was quiet, and my friend seemed to have nothing to do compared with the business which was upon her hands when the school was open ; but these weeks soon passed away, and then I knew the torment that the rest of the boys would be to me. I could not regret, however, that the time of their returning drew near, knowing that Ferdinand would be among the number. When he came I was at the great tree to welcome his entrance into the play-ground, while I kept myself from the sight of every one else. The dear boy soon saw me, and was delighted that I still

remembered him; he had led the man there who came with him, and at that time but few of the boys were to be seen.

“ ‘That’s my cat, Thomas,’ said he, the moment he perceived me; ‘see, see, she recollects me. Oh! do tell mamma, this, it will be such a pleasure to her; tell her that poor Tib came towards me directly.’ ‘Pretty creature!’ said the man, stroking my head, ‘it is a pity you could not have her at home, Master Ferdinand.’ ‘I will, next time I go,’ said he, ‘if mamma will give me leave:’ but poor little fellow, when he went there again, he was in too much trouble to think of what he then said; for in about a fortnight’s time he received a letter, saying his mother was very ill, and desirous of seeing him. The same man was sent to fetch him to her, and from this time I have neither seen nor heard any thing of him, though I have often wished I could by.

any means hear if he had been so unfortunate as to lose so good a parent. His departure was too sudden for him to take any leave of me, nor could I expect it at such a time.

"I waited impatiently more than a month for his return, concealing myself as well as I could by creeping from one place of safety to another, and now and then visiting my old friend the cook in the scullery, till at length most of my haunts were found out by the boys, and every thing they could think of to torment me was put into execution. When fearing there was no likelihood of dear Ferdinand's return, I determined to leave the place, thinking I could scarcely meet with a worse situation than that I was about to quit. But now," said poor Tib, nearly exhausted from so much talking, "if you will give me leave, I must rest my tongue a little, and defer telling you any more till to-morrow morning."

"By all means, my dear," returned the Tabby; "but where will you find a place to rest your aching bones? do you think the warehouse is now free from men? perhaps some corner may still be left where you may creep in and be undisturbed. What say you, shall we go and see? I dare say, after the goods are once placed in it, the men will not come again for many days, and within that time you may perhaps find a better home."

"Thank you, my good friend, I am sure you say all you can to cheer me," replied Tib, "I wish it may be so, and will you go with me to the warehouse, and see what is to become of me? If but one lock of straw be left for me to lie upon, I shall be satisfied, and am sure I can do no harm to any thing we may find there."

"Let us go then," said the Tabby, leading the way.

They were rejoiced to find the place by which they at first entered, yet open,

and room enough left for poor Tib to lodge in without danger or fear of any, as the goods seemed all placed to remain some time. Here she once more laid her weary limbs to rest, and the Tabby returned to her own home.

## CHAP. III.

TIB remained in her new abode very quietly all that day and night, except now and then visiting her friend to satisfy the calls of hunger; and the next morning she again accompanied her to the sunny wall with her health and spirits much recruited, and was enabled thus to continue her tale :

“ On leaving the school I thought myself a miserable object, though compared to what I now am, quite respectable. I was glad to enter any house where I thought I should be received; and soon met with one, the door of which was open, and where there appeared no boys

to torment me. It belonged to a washer-woman, who was too busy at her employment to notice my entrance; yet, when her work was done, and she sat comfortably down to tea, she seemed quite glad of such a companion. 'Why, where did you come from?' said she, on observing me take my station at her fire, 'who sent for you I wonder? but it is good luck they say to have a strange cat come into your house, so I will not turn you out;' and after tea she poured the contents of the milk-pot into a saucer, which she gave me to drink. She was a nice clean woman, and her treatment of me so kind, as soon to make me forget what I had gone through at the school. I remained with her till I was got fat and well again, and then fool-like I gave way to the curiosity of my nature, and one afternoon left her house and entered one much larger at a little distance.

"Here also I met with a welcome re-

ception, though I went no farther than the kitchen, where there were many servants; and except now and then being kicked from the fire-place by one or the other of the footmen, I led a comfortable life here also, was well fed, and well treated. It was in this family I had my first kittens, and was allowed to nurse them till they were old enough to leave me. In short, I began to think myself one of the most fortunate of my kind. My friend, the Tabby, thought I, surely met with more troubles than any one else, and therefore she gave me so many warnings of what I was to expect; for my part I have found none but friends, but alas! I have since found that you did not say too much. It was my going on thus smoothly in both the families to which I joined myself, that made me quite thoughtless of danger wherever I went; and instead of regret, I felt only pleasure when I was taken by the servants to a



house quite at the other end of the town, which their master had hired ! I shall now see some scenes quite new, said I, and find as many friends here as I have left behind me ; and it is this change in the place of my abode," continued she, " which accounts for my not having seen you, my good friend, since, and is the reason that I have not found my way to this wall ; but I have had cause enough to regret that I ever went with them, for here it was my troubles began. After being there some time, I made several acquaintances among my neighbours' cats, one of which I frequented more than the rest, till the master of the house in which she lived, not being well inclined towards us, used every means to keep me away ; and often have I had a pail of water thrown over me, and gone home half drowned ; when, instead of laughing at my distress, the cook would pity me, and order a place to be left at the fire for me to

dry myself. But these showery bathings did not hinder my frequent attempts to see my new friend, till one day the same cruel man threw a gimblet at me, which happened to be in his hand, the point of which stuck in my side, declaring, that 'if that did not do for me, he would throw me into the river the next time I came.' Whether he suspected me of stealing any thing from his larder, that made him so inveterate against me, I know not, but I was too well fed and taken care of at home, to do any thing of that sort, it was for the sake of his cat only that I went there. However, the pain I then felt completely cured me of the wish of visiting one who appeared to feel little or nothing for me, as she never once came to inquire after my wound, though she saw me run howling off under the anguish of it. My good friend the cook was much enraged at seeing the condition I was in, and vowed revenge on the cruel fellow who had thus

wounded me, could she find him out. She took great care of me during my illness, and I was a long time confined in consequence of it, till I was quite tired of the same place, and longed to be well, that I might indulge my fancy by roving about again. Such, I am ashamed to say, was my ungrateful temper; I even grew tired of seeing the cook so often come to the basket in which I was laid, though she always brought me milk, or something nice, which she thought I should like. I have been sufficiently punished for it since; I think so much so as to make me more satisfied and contented should I again meet with so kind a mistress. But I will conceal nothing from you, my dear friend, though I am convinced that I am going to relate what will greatly lessen me in your opinion, and you will truly say, that what I have met with since is my just reward, when I add, that I was no sooner got

quite well, than I left the house in which I had been taken so much care of."

The old Tabby shook her head on hearing this. "And did you really go?" said she---"I must own that there are but few among us who appear to have that sense of gratitude for which dogs are so much talked of. I seem to be sorry for the disgrace it brings upon our species---but you *did* go, and it cannot now be helped. Pray go on; I cannot wonder at any thing that happened to you afterwards."

"Nor scarcely be sorry for it, can you?" said poor Tib, in an humble tone; "but that I should forget your counsel," added she, "hurts me the most."

"Oh!" returned the Tabby, "experience is the best instructor; my advice might have been forgotten, but one would have thought you had felt too much the cook's kindness to have left her, *that* was so recent it could not be out of your mind---but pray go on."

"I have nothing to plead in my excuse," said Tib, "and therefore will proceed in my tale:---"

"Much ashamed of my conduct, and afraid of being brought back again if any one saw my intention, I crept into the area in the dusk of the evening, and bade adieu to that house for ever, and all my friends in it. Hurrying as fast as I could, I vainly hoped no one would see me, as I kept close to the houses, but there was scarcely a boy or girl that passed without noticing me; some only pointed at me, others clapped their hands, while some gave me a kick, and one or two of the boys took off their hats to throw over me, so that I was not without many bruises before I got to a place of safety, which was a watchman's box, and which he had just opened for the night. I own I could not complain or pity myself for the treatment I had received; 'One would think,' said I to myself, 'they knew of my ingratitude, and were determined to repay

me for it.' However, the watchman received me very kindly, though he had nothing to give me but shelter, and this was all I at present wanted. Before he went home in the morning, which was very early, he put me out, saying, 'I don't suppose you will like to stay here all day, Mrs. Puss, therefore you must find your way home again, or if you can't do that, and choose to come here again at night, I'll give you the meeting;' so saying he locked the door and departed, while I, knowing it would be the same to me wherever I went, endeavoured to follow him. 'So I can but see something new,' said I, 'tis all I want,' and therefore crept as close to his heels as I could, till he entered a public house that had been open all the night; here I was afraid to venture, as I saw so many pot-boys idling about, and therefore proceeded some doors farther, till I saw a cellar window not closely shut, and determined to go down, and try what

would be my fate there. But before I proceed, if you please, I should like a little refreshment."

"Yes," said the Tabby, "and so should I too; for my age will not allow me to be so long without food as formerly; indeed I feel myself declining, but we will not talk of it, rather let us make the best of our way home, and we shall again, I dare say, find plenty of provision for us both."

"I shall, I hope, soon be able to provide for myself, my dear friend," said Tib; "it is a shame thus to live upon you."

"How often shall I beg you not to mention this?" returned her friend; "I assure you I always have more than I can eat by myself."

This was their conversation as they travelled to the shed, where they found even more than they expected; for George having observed the companion his favourite had brought, was kind enough to provide for her also, by putting a plate

for each. After eating her share, Tib returned to the warehouse, while the old Tabby took her usual nap before the fire, in hopes of recruiting her strength to hear more of her friend's story in the evening.



## CHAP. IV.

IN the course of the afternoon, and before George returned from school, the Tabby resolved to visit her sick friend; for though her own age and infirmities greatly increased, the anxiety she had felt for her did not in the least wear off. "I shall certainly die soon," said she, "and if you have any regard to my advice, and remember the counsel I at first gave you, of not changing your abode so often, pray follow it now, keep close to me, and seek no farther for a friend. In a few days I shall be no more, I feel my end is approaching, and George, when he sees you constantly with me, will, for my sake, treat you well,

and, after my death, you will supply my place to him, and in his friendship the loss of mine will not be so greatly felt by you."

"Surely you are only trying my regard," said Tib, "when you talk thus; there is nothing I would not do to preserve your life. Is it not your sharing your meals with me that makes you feel weaker, or your having felt so much for me? let me go somewhere else and seek a supply."

"You shall go no where but with me," returned Tabby, "I should like to end my life with you by my side; and George will, I know, continue to provide for us both, if he sees you always there; come home with me, then, and share my basket to-night; you can then finish your history as you are able, and, while I am alive, let us be no more separated."

The affection of her old friend, and the thought of losing her, was too keenly felt by poor Tib to allow her to express it, she

therefore, silently followed her footsteps, and with her entered the house, determined to remain there till she died, if not absolutely turned out; and to act afterwards according to the reception she should meet with.

George was just returned from school; the tea-things were placed on the table, and his mother waiting for him. "Look, my dear," said she, "your cat has brought her companion within doors now; do you allow of that?"

"Oh yes, mother, pray let her stay," said the compassionate boy, "till she is a little better, see how thin she is, and what a condition her back is in; I think it very good of my Tabby to take so much notice of her; but she is a nice cat," continued he, "and I love her dearly," taking his old favourite on his knee, and stroking her on the back; while poor Tib modestly stood behind his chair, every now

and then catching an encouraging glance from her friend.

"Come forward, pussy," said George, looking behind him, "don't be afraid: no one will hurt you here, and for the sake of her you came with, I'll give you a little milk."

Tib purred her thanks, and the old Tabby, highly delighted that her scheme had answered so well, rubbed her head against his knees, and did all she could to express her gratitude.

"Very likely," said George's mother to him, "these cats have been friends a great while; Tabby does not seem at all to dislike her having the milk."

"No, no, she's too good natured for that," returned he, "and she shall not fare the worse, I'll take care of that; if you can't spare any more milk, mother, I'll go and buy her a halfpenny worth, I have got a halfpenny in my pocket."

"Oh there's plenty left, my dear," an

swered she, "and you are welcome to it."

The two friends thus got a comfortable meal together, and by the fire-side; after which they crept closer to each other, and George would stroke them both at one time.

"How kind he is!" said Tib to her friend.

"I knew he would, my dear," returned the Tabby; "for my sake he will treat you kindly; and now I hope you'll promise me not to leave him after I am dead."

"Not if he treats me thus," said Tib, "I cannot; I almost fancy myself with dear Ferdinand again!"

George and his mother went early to bed, and left both Tabby and Tib in quiet possession of the kitchen.

"Well," said the latter very joyfully, "I am not yet turned out, but I was half afraid when I saw your mistress move from her seat; if it was not for her love to

George, I am sure I should have been put without the door before they went up stairs; but here I am," continued she, "and 'tis you, my dear friend; whom I have to thank for it."

"You cannot be more thankful than I am," returned Tabby, "and as it is not late, and neither of us appear sleepy, I will, if you please, hear some more of your adventures. We can sit here while there is any heat remaining in the ashes."

"With all my heart," replied Tib, "I have not been so happy, and with so good a house over my head, as I am to-night for some time past. I left off, I think, just as I had crept through a half shut cellar window; and such a house as I then got into I believe you can have no conception of. Here I saw variety enough, for it was inhabited by six or seven different families, who seldom or ever spoke to each other but to quarrel, and in turn I belonged to them all. Under ground lived

the master and mistress of it, who let their rooms above to whomsoever would take them. I was no sooner through the little place of a cellar, to which the window admitted me, than I came into the kitchen, where they were sitting at breakfast; two little dirty children were with them, who both cried out on seeing me, as if they were frightened. 'What's the matter now?' said their father, when he saw the cause of their alarm, 'are you afraid of a cat? she won't hurt you.' I expected from this that he would have been more kind to me than he was, for, on my venturing to approach the table, he lifted up his foot and gave me a kick, which threw me quite to the other end of the room. 'Dear! Tom, I never saw any body so cruel in my life as you are,' said his wife, 'you deserve to be flogged, that you do,' while the children's alarm for themselves was turned into fear for me, and, on hearing my cries, they both seemed to pity me.

'We want no cats,' said he; 'I won't have her encouraged to come here.' 'But she shall if she likes it,' replied his wife, as I afterwards discovered; more out of perverseness to him than compassion for me, 'you ought to be ashamed to treat poor dumb animals so,' and, getting up, she came and carried me to the fire. 'Come and stroke her Billy and Betsey,' said she; 'see how your father has hurt her; she won't scratch you, poor thing!' The children then ventured to do as she bade them, and were much pleased to see me eat the milk she poured into a saucer. 'And so,' said he, 'you are going to give her what ought to be for our tea this afternoon; if I had done so, what a piece of work you would have made about it.' 'You are always thinking of yourself,' answered she; 'afraid of not having any milk with your tea now, when you have just had a good breakfast; it is a shame to deny a poor cat a little of what's left.' 'You are as likely to do it



yourself to-morrow morning,' said he, as he went out of the room; and I found his words true; for when she saw that he took no farther notice of it, she never gave me any thing to eat or drink,

"But this dispute was only a prelude to what I was afterwards to witness in the house above stairs; for there was nothing else to be heard, as I said, from morning to night. There was no regularity or comfort in any part of it, except with an old woman up two pair of stairs, who kept a school for little children, and whose scholars were mostly belonging to the families there, and in the two or three neighbouring houses. It often made me wonder to see these little creatures get up and down stairs as they did, holding fast by the balusters all the way for fear of falling, while their old governess used to stand at the top, watching them till they were all safely landed at the bottom.

“But she was not the first person I visited after I left the lower region ; nor would my curiosity allow me to remain long in any part of it, till I had seen every room in the house. On the ground floor were two little shops, one for pictures and ballads, the other for garden stuff ; but this was far from being kept in the order in which my first mistress kept her’s, and whom I told you of so long ago. I might here have rolled the potatoes and turnips about as much as I pleased, without vexing the owner of them ; but whether I was then grown too old for such things to amuse me, or that it was the perverseness of my nature not to wish to do so when I found it gave no uneasiness to any body, I cannot tell, but I now felt no desire to play with them. An old man kept the other shop, but I could not get him to take any notice of me ; ’tis true he never used me ill, or turned me out of his territories,

which was only a little space parted off from his shop, and which served him for his kitchen and bedchamber ; but whether I came into it or went out, he seemed not to regard, though he took special care that I should not find any thing to eat or drink whenever I visited him. A woman owned the other shop and a little room behind it ; and in the opposite apartment to that of the old school-mistress, lived another who carried on the same trade as the one below, except that she attended the markets with the greens and garden stuff her husband brought her from the country ; and scarcely ever did she come down stairs to go out with her load, than a dispute arose between these two women, which had the best goods : it is said that ' two of a trade can never agree,' and I am sure they verified the remark. In one apartment on the first floor lived two young women who were mantua-makers, and in the other a

man and his wife, with four children, very different from those below ; as they were all so fond of me, I was like to have been torn in pieces each time I went among them, each wanting to have me in their arms at the same time. The rooms at the very top of the house were let to single men, who only came there to sleep. But, among all this variety, I liked none so well as the school-mistress, who often put me in mind of her in whose house I was born, and she would have been as fond of me as that old lady was of my mother, had I endeavoured to keep in her favour. She would not suffer any of her little ones to teaze me ; but sometimes, when they had read their alphabet quite perfect, by way of reward I was allowed to lie in their laps, while they scratched my poll, and listened to my loud purrings ; till at length a quarrel arose between them, in whose lap I purred the loudest, and she was

obliged to take me away, and settle the difference by telling them they were wiser than babies to dispute about such a thing as that. After creeping about from room to room for nearly three months, though I chiefly lived with her. I am now speaking of, and indeed she was the only one who gave me any thing to live upon. I grew tired of this situation also, and resolved to seek another.

"But you are nodding, my friend," said Tib, observing her old companion half asleep, "I'm afraid I have tired you with my tongue; I forget how long I have been talking. The fire is quite out; shall we go to your bed?"

"Go where?" said the Tabby, "go to bed! Oh dear! so we should, I had quite forgot where we were; but upon my word I beg your pardon, I have not been long asleep, or if I have, I have heard all you were saying---about the old school-mistress wasn't it?"

"Yes," said Tib, smiling; "but I had made my story almost too long for you."

"No, no," returned her friend, "don't think so, I hear better when my eyes are shut, that is all, and if I have been a little rude, your friendship will, I know, excuse it; but now, if you like, we will go to bed, and you shall share the basket and piece of carpetting I lie upon; both together we shall soon get warm;" and so saying, she led the way to a closet in which she slept.

"You have forgiven my appearing so inattentive, have not you?" said she.

"To be sure I have," said Tib; "'tis I have most reason to ask forgiveness for keeping you up so much beyond your usual hour."

"Ah! my dear, there was a time when I did not care how late I was---but you love me too well, I know, to despise me for the infirmities of age."

“ Despise you !” said Tib, “ I love you dearly ;” and then laying their heads close together, they were soon both sound asleep; and had nothing to disturb their slumbers the rest of the night.

## CHAP. V.

As soon as he came down stairs the next morning, George noticed both his four-footed companions sitting as usual close together, and resolved not to part them. "My poor Tabby," said he, "you shall not lose your breakfast for bringing in another to share it with you ; but I will take plenty of milk for you both ;" and when the milk-man came, he, unknown to his mother, bought a double quantity, that neither of them should want a breakfast. On his going to school, they repaired to the place of their old resort, but the poor old Tabby could scarcely crawl along, while Tib evidently grew better and stronger.



"Let me hear the remainder of your story first, my dear friend," said she; "while I am able to listen to it, I very much fear I shall soon lose all my recollection; yet, if you can avoid it, don't forsake me, and, in these my last days, if I should behave to you with indifference, set it down to my age and infirmities, not want of regard, for, while I have life and sense, and it appears to me now, my dear, that these will not be granted me long, you will be nearest my heart, and next to you, dear George."

The affection of Tib increased every time her friend talked in this way; sometimes she feared she saw the truth of what she said, and at another hoped it might be only the imagination of her aged friend, and that in a few days she should find her spirits better: "But," said she, "I will comply with your request in every thing, my best counsellor, and promise you to remain with George till my dying day."

he will keep me so long. I will also go on with my story, as you desire it, though I am half afraid I shall fatigue you, and perhaps you will feel too much at my sufferings, though I will be as brief in the account of them as possible. As to saying I will not leave you till you are no more, it is impossible to do otherwise, nor can the infirmities or forgetfulness of my friend make me forget her."

"I thank you, my dear," returned the Tabby, "I will mention this subject no more, for I see you can scarcely bear it, though to me the thought of losing life is in comparison nothing to living quite unable to help myself. But go on with your tale. This warm sun revives me, I feel quite alive again, and interested in what you are going to relate--you were just going to leave the school-mistress," continued she; "you see that I have not forgot where you left off, though you thought me half asleep last night."

Tib smiled, and continued her eventful history as follows :

“ When I left this house, I did not go far, but crept into the first I could meet with open, which was a cheesemonger’s shop ; here I found plenty of food and employment in catching mice ; nor did any one wish to turn me out, though there were two cats already there. They were so infested with vermin that I was a welcome visitor, particularly as I did more execution among them than both the other cats had done before. ‘ Here,’ said the man to his wife, who returned from a visit in the country after I had been there about a week, and brought two little boys with her, whom I afterwards found were the children of a sister just dead, and she was endeavouring to supply the place of their mother to them---‘ here,’ said her husband, ‘ we have got a new servant since you went, and she does her work well, I’ll promise you ; another cat is come among us, and I

am happy to tell you she is a good mouser too, not like the lazy things we have had; she has caught eighteen or twenty mice already; our cheeses will not go so fast now I hope.'

" 'I hope not,' answered she, patting me on the back, ' unless we get better customers than the mice, which pay for nothing that they take, nor can we get their names upon our books.' The children laughed at this remark of their aunt, and seemed much inclined to notice me, but she would not let them take me in their laps; ' for,' said she, ' it will soon make her forget to catch mice if she is nursed and played with; nothing spoils a good mouser so soon.' In consequence of this I was not made much of, as it is commonly said when any one is taken a deal of notice of by another; but I was well-spoken of, much better than the other cats, who, for some time, regarded me with a jealous eye, and would take no notice of me but

to snarl and spit at me, which, whenever our master or mistress saw, they were beat for it; while I was taken more care of than ever, invited to come nearer the fire, and the children allowed to give me some milk, or whatever they were then partaking of.

“The care this good man and woman took of these motherless children, and the kindness with which they treated them, greatly raised them in my estimation; they had lost two or three children of their own, and these seemed to supply their place; in short, it was a respectable and united family into which I was now got, but they were not so fortunate in their business as I thought they deserved to be: every Saturday night the man settled his accounts---but I could observe this by his countenance, and which I saw his wife watch almost as narrowly as myself, and you know that a cat is noted for so doing. I could not help being interested for them, though I knew not what was going on, but

have since learned he feared becoming a bankrupt, which is not being able to pay those of whom he had bought goods to sell again, and which was afterwards the case, though I did not know what would be the consequence of this. I kept his store-room and his shop as free from mice as I could; but alas! very few people came into the latter, nor did he always receive money from those who did; they owed him, and he owed others, till at last I heard him tell his wife he feared they were quite ruined. She turned pale at hearing this, and the next day all their fears were confirmed; for the bailiffs, as they are called, came into the house, and terrible looking men they were; I do not wonder at people's frightening their children when they have done wrong, by threatening to send the bailiffs after them. When they saw these men about, and their master gone, while his wife and the children stood crying and

begging to go out of the house as soon as they could, the other two cats came creeping round me---'What is the matter?' said they both, 'can you tell?' 'No,' said I, 'I know not what is going on---but I will not leave my master and mistress if I can help it; perhaps they have heard some bad news, and are only gone out for a while; you see they have taken nothing with them, and are very much troubled. I am determined to stay till they come back again.' 'Are you?' said they, looking at each other with a significant leer; 'it is a wonder they had not taken such a favourite as you are with them; but we do not suppose they will have many mice to catch for the future, or that you'll ever see them here again. However, you may stay if you like, and see what you shall see, but as for us we shall be off as fast as we can;' and with these words they set off, swinging their tails and laughing at my folly.

The next day the house was all confusion ; every piece of furniture in it was put out of its place, while I crept about from room to room, vainly hoping for the return of my master and mistress, and wondering what it all could mean, and now and then meeting with a mouse to satisfy my hunger. I every day saw some new faces of men who appeared to be taking account of the goods ; to some of these I was the object of mirth, and of pity to others, till, from what they said in my hearing, I understood every thing was to be sold for the benefit of the creditors ; but even then I did not doubt that my master would return with his family when this was done. But at length the house got fuller than ever ; people came in from all quarters, men, women, and children ; one looked at one thing, and another at the other. ‘ Do buy this,’ said one ; ‘ I am sure we want this,’ said another ; while I could not help being vexed to



see what my mistress kept so clean, and made so choice of, treated as they now were. No one seemed to take any care of them, and the house was ransacked from top to bottom. The next morning, to my great surprise, the racket continued, and the sale began. You would have laughed to have seen the solemn looks of the ladies, who sat round a long table, on which the goods were exhibited, and how eagerly they watched the looks of a great tall man, mounted above them all, at one end of it, who, with an ivory hammer in his hand, knocked down the things to those who offered the highest price for them. I continued in the room all the time, and before the auctioneer arrived, for so was this tall man called. I walked about among the ladies with my usual boldness, and was, till he came in, the principal object of their attention. 'Poor thing!' said one, offering her muff for me to lie upon, 'I never saw a

cat so tame before ; '---' how much will she sell for, I wonder,' said another ; ' and what lot is she to be put up with ?' In this way they amused themselves till the auction began, and then their whole attention was taken up by the various things placed before them. I crept under the table at which, mounted on the lower one, the auctioneer was placed, and, except when he gave a very loud thump over my head with his hammer, enjoyed a comfortable nap."

It now began raining very fast, and both Tib and her friend were too great invalids to think it safe to sit there during the shower ; they therefore hastened home, but not before the poor old Tabby had got completely wet through, nor could she help fearing her illness would be increased by it. On their return a place was opened for both to dry themselves at the fire ; but Tabby felt the ill effects of so sudden a change ;

for, on falling asleep, when she awoke she was scarcely able to move a limb.

"I have taken cold," said she to her friend, who sat quietly watching her; "I shall never be able to go upon that wall again, my legs will not carry me so far; but how are you? do you not feel something of the wet jacket you have had?"

"No," said Tib; "since sitting by this fire, I am as dry and as warm as ever, and hope you will be so too when our good little friend comes home, and has provided some warm milk for you---and see here he is."

At these words George entered, and seeing the sad condition of his favourite, he had no sooner taken off his hat than he did as Tib had said, warmed some milk in a saucepan, and gave her, refusing to eat any of the dinner his mother had provided for him till he had seen her drink it. Tib

came in for her share, and then had the satisfaction of seeing her friend again composed to sleep, during which she tenderly watched her, hoping a few hours slumber would restore her to her usual health.

## CHAP. VI.

WHEN Tabby waked about her accustomed time in the afternoon, and the tea-things, as usual, were waiting for George, she found herself somewhat better, though still unable to move.

"How are you now?" said Tib affectionately.

"A little better, my dear," replied she, "but certainly I shall never be able to get to my favourite spot again, though I was far from thinking so when I left it; or I could not have come away without feeling more. You will soon have the sole possession of it, my friend; there I hope you will continue to sit, and sometimes think of me."

"That I shall do wherever I am," returned Tib; "I need not go to the sunny wall to call to remembrance your extreme kindness. But though you may be no longer able to go there, you will, I hope, yet remain for some time an inmate of this house, and I shall have it in my power to return in some measure the attention you have shewn me, by tenderly nursing you."

The entrance of George from school put a stop to their conversation at present; the good-natured boy was as anxious for the health of his favourite as was Tib, and neither of them were wanting in their endeavours to make it better, and towards bed-time she seemed quite recovered again.

"I must hear the remainder of your story to-night," said she; "as soon as George and his mother are gone up stairs, you will, I hope, finish the relation."

"Certainly, if you wish it," replied her

friend ; " but surely it will tire you, though I have not much more to relate : had I not better defer it till to-morrow ?"

" I may not be alive to hear it then," said Tabby ; " no, no, pray begin now ; I promise you not to go to sleep again."

" Well then," said Tib, " as you are so eager to hear it, I will finish my mournful story as soon as I can.

" The sale which I told you of lasted three or four days, during which time I remained in the house till I saw every bit of furniture taken out of it, and when the last thing was removed, the porters began again to inquire what was to become of me--- ' Give her to us,' said some idle boys who were standing about the door, ' we will do for her.' One man, more humane than the rest, at first objected to my being given up to them, but, on condition that they were not to kill me, I was at length put into their hands. Often have I thought since, though he imagined he was doing

me a kindness by making this condition in my behalf, I should not have suffered half so much had they been allowed to kill me quite. It was a night of some public rejoicing I believe, though of much grief to me, for there were bonfires and illuminations all over the town, and these cruel boys seemed to think it their sport to treat me ill, and that they were licensed to do so; for first they hung me up to a bough of a tree, and beat me as long as they thought I could bear it, then tied a cracker round my neck, which, as it went off, singed my back and ears very much, and, to complete the whole, they carried me towards a large bonfire, into which they kept driving me, and, with the most savage cruelty, burst into a loud laugh every time the fire caught hold of any of my hairs. Oh! you don't know what I then suffered; even the recollection of it quite overcomes me."

"I cannot bear to hear it," returned her friend, "I feel my back and every bone in



my skin ache as you relate it; Oh! how much more have you gone through than I ever did. But pray tell me how you escaped with your life from such cruel creatures?"

"After suffering thus I dare say half an hour," said Tib, "and being driven backward and forwards through the flames; and which reduced me to the condition I was in when we met the other day, a gentleman who was walking by saw what they were about, and raising his voice, he threatened them with a very severe punishment if they did not desist. He seemed to be a person of consequence; for the moment he came amongst them, each endeavoured to throw the blame upon the other, and I, during the reprimand he was kind enough to give them on my account, got away as fast as my sufferings would let me. My trembling limbs scarcely carried me from the sight of the fire, before I fell down quite sick and faint with the pain I felt;

every one who passed seemed too much engaged with the festivity and enjoyment of the evening to observe me ; and when I was a little recovered, I could only slowly crawl toward the first place in which I thought I could be safe : this was a miserable shed, used only to put dirt and ashes in. Here I laid for two or three days, nearly exhausted for want of food, and wondering that I lived so long. While pondering over the various events of my life, my memory recalled the history which you had formerly given me of your's. I thought of the sunny wall, and anxiously wished to be there once more with you, ' but that,' thought I, ' is impossible ; my friend, before now, is no more ; happy should I be to be by her side wherever her bones are now lying ; and as insensible to all that is passing around me, I am now convinced that she did not exaggerate when she made the human race worse than the brutes. Oh ! if I could but once more

find out that place in which she told me so, there would I wish to draw my last breath, and, with my dying words, bear witness to this truth.' Then mounting to the top of the heap of dirt by which I laid, to my great surprise I discovered that I was nearly close to the well-known spot, and saw you sitting in the same place; for, though changed by age, I could not be mistaken; I knew your grave look, and your tail twisted round your feet, the same attitude in which I used to see you so many years ago. At this sight all my feelings revived, and, determined to make one more effort, I resolved to come and breathe my last at your feet."

"Instead of which," interrupted the Tabby, "you are come to witness my departure, and I am glad of it, my friend; you have many years yet to live, and, under the care of George, will never again experience the sad treatment you have received;—may you end your life with him,

and as happily as I shall close mine. Surely I have lived long enough, and, compared to your's, though I have seen so many more years, my life has not been so full of vicissitudes as I at first imagined. But come, let us retire to the basket, for perhaps the last night which we shall spend together; yet alas!" continued she, on recollecting the state she was in, "I cannot even move to get to the closet; I find my limbs too stiff."

"Let us then remain here," said Tib, sighing to observe her friend so weak; "you shall lie close to my side, and rest your head upon my back, now very well able to bear you, and the hair there is already grown sufficiently to prevent your finding it a hard pillow."

"Oh!" said Tabby, in a faint voice, "I cannot wish for a better; but can you sleep, my dear, thus stretched out?"

"Very comfortably," returned the other, "if I find you are not awake."

"Good night, then, my beloved friend," said Tabby, "to-morrow morning, if I am alive, I shall be better able to express my thanks."

"I wish you may rest well," said Tib, speaking kindly, "and be sure to wake me immediately, if you want any thing, and what is in my power to procure, you shall have."

The poor old Tabby was too near her end to answer, and before the morning, she had closed her eyes for ever, without Tib's knowing any thing of it; so peaceful were her last moments, that she never moved her head from the back of her friend, and it was not till the morning light darted into the eyes of Tib, that she began to fear this might have been the case, finding she had not altered her posture all the night.

"Are you awake?" said she, venturing gently to turn her head round; but she received no answer, and too plainly saw the

cause, on beholding the lifeless body of her friend. Her piteous cries soon awakened George, who hastily arose and came down stairs, fearing that his favourite was worse; but when he saw her extended on the cold bricks, he would have blamed poor Tib as the cause, had he not seen that she was grieving as much as himself. She licked the back of her departed friend, then tried to raise her head, till, failing in the effort, she laid herself down, and mournfully mewed over her cold remains. George's tears flowed afresh at this sight. "My dear Tabby," said he, "if I had put you into your basket last night, perhaps you would not have died; Oh! how I wish I had! how careless it was of me not to do so, when I knew you were not able to move towards it;---and you, my poor pussy," continued he, stroking poor Tib upon the back, "you have lost your friend too, but you shall stay here if you

like, though you must not expect me ever to love you as I did her."

Tib looked up with a melancholy air, and, as if to thank him, she tried to lick his hand; but again turning to her friend, all her grief seemed renewed.

At this moment George's mother came down stairs. "What is the matter?" said she, seeing him in tears, "and how came you up so early?"

"Oh mother, my poor Tabby is dead!" said he, "look here, she is stretched out upon the cold bricks, and it is my fault, because I forgot to put her into the basket last night."

"What, poor thing! is she dead?" said his mother; "I was afraid she would not live long, she seemed so very ill yesterday. But, my dear, don't say so; her being put into the basket would not have saved her life, perhaps only prolonged her sufferings, and now she has felt but little; you must consider how old she was when first

she came here, and how many years you have had her. She began to be very feeble, and you could not expect her to live for ever."

George could not receive much comfort from this speech, but he felt more while stroking Tib, and sharing in her grief.

"I'll always keep this cat, mother," said he, "she has been so fond of Tabby, and you can't think how she was grieving for her when I came down."

"Yes," said she, "that you shall do if it is any pleasure to you, my dear; but pray don't cry so, I cannot bear to see it, and remember, after all, it is but a cat you are shedding so many tears for: it is wrong to grieve for what is of so little consequence."

"Oh do not say my Tabby was of little consequence, dear mother!" said he; "but I will not cry any more, if I can help it."

"That's a good boy," said she, "and



now help me to light the fire and get the breakfast, and we'll move the poor Tabby out of the way, till you come home at twelve o'clock, and then you shall bury her in the yard, if you like;" and she then took up the body, and carried it into the basket, in which poor Tabby had passed so many nights; "there, poor cat," said she, "I am sorry you are dead, for your own sake, as well as for George's, but it is what I have a long time expected."

Tib followed the remains of her friend with a heavy heart; nor could George prevail upon her to leave them to partake of his breakfast, or even to eat the milk which he brought to the basket for that purpose: "Poor thing!" said he, "how much she feels the loss of her friend; I can't persuade her to eat."

"After she is buried, my dear, she will," returned his mother; "but it is time for you to go to school. I promise you not to put her into the ground till your return,

and perhaps you can get one of the boys to write her an epitaph."

"So I will, mother," said he; and in the business of the morning, George nearly forgot his sorrows; nor did he come home without procuring what he wished.

Having borrowed a spade, he, with the assistance of his mother, dug a grave for his much-lamented favourite, over which he placed the following lines, furnished by one of his school-fellows, written on a large piece of paper:

Here lies George's poor old Tabby,  
Who, tho' not buried in Westminster-Abbey,  
Deserves to have her name recorded  
In lines like these, tho' better worded;  
But since no abler poet's found,  
I'll only add, she's under ground.

Poor Tib and himself were sincere mourners at her funeral; and after this last tribute of affection to her memory, they felt themselves still more necessary to each other. George liked to have Tib always

with him, because she reminded him of her friend, and, for the same reason, Tib liked to be with him, and under his care she resolved to spend the remainder of her life. She would have no one now to whom to relate them should she go in quest of farther adventures; but the late severe sufferings she had experienced, and the death of her beloved friend, had deadened her to every desire of seeing more of the world---and George had the melancholy pleasure of burying her in the grave of her friend some few years after.

FINIS.



